"Military System in Northern India (606 A.D-1206 A.D): A Study",

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CERTIFICATE

I certify that Mr. Prabhakar Tyagi worked under my supervision for his Ph.D. thesis entitled **"Military System in Northern India (606 A.D-1206 A.D): A Study",** the work done by him is worthy of the consideration for the award of the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the History.

It further clarifies that:

1. The Ph.D thesis embodies the work of the candidate himself.
2. The candidate worked under me for the period required under the statues.
3. The candidate has put in the required attendance during this period.
4. The conduct of the scholar remained satisfactory during the period.

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CHAPTER–I
INTRODUCTION

The instinct of self-preservation which is so strong even among the lower animals has been present in Man ever since the dawn of human history. From the Paleolithic times he has been fighting and defending himself against Nature and wild beasts, and with his steady march from barbarism to civilization and the gradual development of intellectual pursuits he has discovered weapons first to defend himself, then to defend his family and clan and finally his own territory and nation. In India which is the home of one of the oldest civilizations of the world, the people passed through all the processes of individual, clan and territorial fighting in the different stages of their interestingly long and complicated history. The object of this work is to portray as far as possible a picture of the military system of ancient India and her methods of national defence with special reference to Northern Indian history from the accession of Harsha in KYannauj till the accession of Qutubuddin Aibek in Delhi[1].

With awesome mutism the silvery plains of North India have been witness to a countless battles for her mastery since the days of the *Rigveda*. Kingdoms rose and fell in never-ending succession. That explains the dedication of one fourth of the Rigvedic hymns to Indra, the God of War[2] That is the raisondetre for the glorification of war so

eloquently indulged in by the two great epics- the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as the Puranas.

War affects the destiny of nations and lives of millions. It is not a simple affair and its proper study bristles with complex problems. Any worthwhile study of warfare is bound to be dubbed as incongruous when done independent of major factors affecting it i.e., geographical, socio-philosophical and political. Therefore, before elaborating on warfare in the early mediaeval period of Indian history, it is incumbent upon us to peruse these factors in some detail.

GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR

We first take up the geographical factor. Geography has been defined as science of the earth and all life upon it. Its scope is extremely wide. However, for the assessment of warfare in a particular country, a broad knowledge of its geography will suffice. The major elements which are to be considered for this purpose are: location, size and shape, climate, physiographic, people, economic development and communications. This is essential because every aspect of geography affects military operations, strategy as well as tactics. Military geography embodies the study of the physical geography with a view to assessing its suitability for strategical maneuvering. The lay of the land and distribution of vital resources are as vital as are the means of

communications[3]

Shape and Size

The accounts of Greeks testify that the Indians had a very accurate knowledge of the shape and size of their country. The whole of India was described to Alexander by Indian who knew it well. Patrokles, who held the government of the northeast satrapies of the Syrian empire under Saleukas Nikator and Antiochus Sotar, himself collected information about India which was lauded by Eratosthenes has described India as a "rhomboid or unequal quadrilateral in shape with the Indus on the west, the mountains on the north and the sea on the east and south."[4]

Diodrous reckoned the extent of India from east to west as 28,000 stadia and from north to south 32,000 stadia. This comes to 60,000, all put together. The Mahabharata likens the shape of India to that of an equilateral triangle. This triangle was divided into four small equal triangles, the base of which is formed by the Himalayas and the apex by the Kanya Kumari. Astronomers, such as Parasara and Varahamihira divided India into nine divisions (Nava Khandas). This division along with their chief regions in brackets were, Central (Panchala), East (Magadha), South-east (Kalinga) South (Avanti), South West (Anarta), West (Sindhu-Sauvira), North-west (Harahura), North (Madra) and North-east (Kuninda). The Puranas generally agree with the nine fold

division of the country. But the three early Puranas, viz. Vishnu, Yayu and Matsya stick to the Mahabharata's division of India into five regions. The later was the generally accepted division in the early centrues of the Christian era. Its was also adopted by the Chinese pilgrims, including the celebrated Yuan Chwang who visited Indian in the seventh century AD.[5]

Five divisions of "Five Indias," as they are termed by the Chinese, are given below:

I. Northern India included Punjab, Kashmir, the neighbouring hill states and the whole of eastern Afganistan.

II. Western India comprised western Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kachh, portion of the adjoining coast on the lower course of the Narmada river and Sindh.

III. Central India included the whole of the Gangetic region from Thaneshwar to the head of the Delta and between Himalaya mountains and the river Narmada.

IV. Assam, Bengal, together with Sambhalpur, Orissa and Ganjam formed Eastern India.

V. Southern India included the whole of the Peninsula from Nasik on the west and Ganjam on the east to Kanya KumarI on the South.[6]

This arrangement is simplet than that of the nine divisions. The

Chinese borrowed their system from the Hindus who likened their country to the lotus flower, the middle being the Central India, and the eight surrounding petals being the other divisions.[7]

According to the *Vishnu Purana* "the country that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bharat … "[8]. India lies in the north of Equator and the tropic of Cancer girdles her in the middle. Himalayas and its off-shoots form the moundatin barrier of the sub-continent. On the west it separates the Indus valley from Persia, Seistan, Makran and Baluchistan with the help of the Kirthan, Sulaiman and Safedkoh ranges. Further north the Hindukush safeguards the borders. Pamirs and Karakarom intervene between Kashmir and Turkistan. Radiating from Pamirs, the Himalays extend throughout the north upto Brahamputra. On the eastern most limits of India, the mountains fold round, run from north to south, separating Bengal and Assam from Burma.[9]

Whereas the natural boundaries of India in the north and the south are well marked, on the west they have often been changing. For quite some time eastern Ariana or the large part of the Afghanistan formed part of India. During his visit to India (629-645 AD) Yuan Chang found that the king f this country was of kshatriya caste.[10] During the whole of the tenth and early years of the 11th century AD Kabul valley was ruled over

by a Brahmana dynasty. No wonder that the population of eastern Afghanistan is of Indian descent. The Indian element, which had braved the foreign aggressions for centuries, could no longer subsist after the slaughter began at the hands of the Ghanavids.[11]

Area

Yin-tu or India, according to Yuan Chwang, measured 90,000 Li in circuit[12], "which is more than double the truth."[13] Indian encircles an area of about fifteen hundred thousand square miles and is thus equal in extent to the whole of Europe excluding Russia. The coastline stretches beyond three thousand and miles and the length of its mountains is 1500 miles. India has the highest mountain on the surface of earth. Its plains are low and alluvial, high table lands, dense forests as well as vast sheets of dry deserts. It has the hottest of the plains as well as coldest of the hill stations.[14]

Climate and Products

There is almost every variety of climate and natural product in India. Its mountains have lofty summits eternally covered with snow. The lower mountainous region abounds in thick green forests. The plains have extremes of temperature and fertility. There are hot, arid deserts in the south-west. The rich alluvial plains of the Ganga lay between the Himalayas in the north and the Narmada in the south. The plains alternate

with wild hilly regions and table-lands. Seasons vary from the extremely hot to the bitterly cold.[15] The rains bring nourishment to the soil, but hamper military operations on a mass scale.

A medieval Arab writer thus speaks of this country- "India… is the most agreeable abode on the earth and the most pleasant quarter of the world. Its dust is purer than air, and its air purer than purity; its delightful plains resemble the garden of paradise, and the particles of its earth are like rubies and coarals.[16]

Geography and Warfare

In India the course of warfare has to an exceptional degree, been dictated by the geography, particularly its climate and influx of population.[17] Although there is lack of natural boundaries within her frontiers yet the invader has to be extremely careful. The Indus valley, which is a world in itself, has on its east a mighty desert which would lead the invader has to be extremely careful. The Indus valley, which is a world in itself, has on its east a mighty desert which would lead the invader into an inhospitable region. Its parched solid and merciless sun make survival extremely difficult. Her inhabitants were hardly, restless and ferocious fighters. Across the Aravali range, only a few hundred miles away from the heart of arid desert, is the Ganga valley, which has the means of supporting the densest population. It has been the centre of

Indian Civilization from very early times. The bounties of nature have made man averse to hard toils. To this valley of gold, there is but a narrow entrance. “The Aravali hills from the south-west and the Shiwalika (Sapadalaksa) from the north-east approach each other across the plain separating the Punajb from the Ganga valley leaving a conveniently narrow gap, not more than a hundred miles in width.”[18] Through this bottleneck alone the Ganga Valley, popularly called, Hindustan could be approached from the west by the attacking hordes. The fate of Hindustan was decided right at the entrance to the valley i.e. the plains of Karnal District of Haryana, comprising the famous battle-grounds of Panipat and Tarain. “For once the invader set his foot inside the flat river-country of the Ganga, defence was necessarily at a disadvantage.[19] Vast cavalry forces can easily sweep as they have done age after age in the past-through the green belt from the Khaibar Pass via Delhi to Bengal’s capital; without meeting with any natural obstacle, if any the forts on the way are by-passed. In these plains, empires have fought empires, and India’s fate has been decided by one single gigantic clash of arms.[20]

Bengal, which is a country of ‘plenty,’ is remarkably well-provided with natural defences, Entrance to it has also been made narrow by the northern spurs of Vindhyas and the southern ones of the Tarai. Her

climate, numerous swift flowing rivers and rivulets with seasonal floods, are a great obstacle to the northerners."[21] On the west, almost unbroken chain of hills and trackless forests extend to a great to length towards the sea; on the east he is shut off by the Brahamputra which leads to another narrow valley, equally fertile but whose uneven soil, flooded streams and moist air are a death trap to the western invader."[22]

Lack of adequate knowledge of Indian geography proved disastrous to many foreign invaders. Muhammad Ghori's earlier attempts at invading India provide a good illustration of this fact. At this juncture a word about the route from Afghanistan to India will not be out of place. The familiar route was not through the well-known Khaiber pass or the Bolan or the lesser known Kurram and Tochi passes, but through the Gomal which led to Dera Ismail Khan and from there to upper Sind-Sagar-Doab. This is borne out by the fact that during the 13th century the first military target was Multan or Uch and not Lahore or Peshewar, Kurram, Tochi and Gomal passes provided the shortest route to the Punjab. Such is not the case with the Khaiber pass, which involved a long detour through the north. This route had become unsafe at the hands of ever hostile tribes inhabiting northern Sind-Sagar-Doab. In his first expedition Muhammad Muizzuddin Ghori could conquer Multan and Uch. In his next expedition he tried to penetrate through western

Rajasthan. Pressure from the Turks had kept the Rajputs preoccupied during the last half a century. The defeat and destruction of 'Turuska' army by Anahilladeva, a contemporary of Bhima I of Gujarat, and also at the hands of Kalhara, whose inscriptions range from 1161 to 1179 AD, bring out clearly the importance of geographical factor in the warfare of northern India. Unmindful of the fate of his predecessors on the treacherous track of conquest, Muhammad Ghori directed his forces against the Chalukyas of Gujarat. He reckoned that his conquest of Gujarat would provide him a key to the Indian hinterland and facilitate his plan of out-flanking Ghazna vids of the Punjab. Passing through Multan and Unch in 1178 AD he dashed across the great desert and arrived at the foot of Mount Abu with an army exhausted and work out. There he found the Rajputs under the Standard of Mulraja II eager to thwart his design. In the ensuing action, fought near the village of Kayadra on the ground of enemy's choosing, he suffered a signal defeat and was lucky to escape home. The geography had thus pronounced its dictates. It showed to him that there was only one feasible approach to Hindustan and that lay through the Punjab. Accordingly, the next few years witnessed his steady advance through Khusrau Malik's dominions. Preshawar fell in 1179 AD, Sialkot in 1185 AD and Lahore AD. Three years thereafter, he could advance his ambitious designs against India proper.[23]

Before Muhammad Ghori, the Arab arms had as woefully sunk to the sands of Sindh. This was not because the Arabs had lost their martial vigour by which they had conquered mighty empires of Europe and Asia. It was because they had failed to grasp the true geographical factor affecting conduct of war in India. The Arab invasion was a failure. "It attacked from the wrong quarter, entered on the least productive province."[24] To drive the point home we other example also. Bahlim, the governor of Punajb, captured Nagaur and accomplished by ten sons set out against his master Bahram, he was "swallowed up in a quick sand near Multan" after having been defeated by Bahram. And again, Muslim soldiers were defeated by Arnoraja of Sakambhari and Ajmer died of exhaustion… and not a few perished of thirst in the waterless desert. Some found their graves in the shifting sands of Rajasthan.[25] The valour of man should, therefore, learn to contend with the force of geography.

The last major geographical factor of war in India is the climate. Since the monsoon rains and before that burning heat of India, made military operations virtually impossible during May-September, the best campaigning seasons was between October and November when "the crops were ripe, the herbage green and it was possible to live off the country.[26]

During the period covered by this work (606 A.D-1206 AD) social

conditions in India underwent numerous changes. The caste system was becoming more rigid and we find distinguished rulers attempting to keep people confined to their spheres of work as enjoined by their respective castes. Harivarman and his son Adityavarman of the Maukhari dynasty have been depicted (in the Harsha inscription of 555 AD of Isanavarman) as perpetuating and enforcing moral laws and the laws of Varnasrama in the Country. The injuctions of the smrtis were proudly implemented by the Maitrakas of Valabhi. That Prabharkarvardhana employed his army to enforce caste system, shown by the Banskhera inscription. The enforcement of the system became such as vital duty of the kings that 'Parivarjitra-vernasankara' became almost a stock-expression in the discretion of rulers particularly of north India[27].

This division of society into four distinct categories decided by the accident of birth had its roots in the Vedic doctrine of divine creation of the social order[28] "It rooted in intelligence psychology and was almost inevitable in the circumstances in which it arose[29]

The specific features of the later caste system, like ascendancy of brahmanas, details of dress and etiquette for each caste group and the segregation of the lowest class as untouchables, can be traced back to the oldest *smrtis*. The system came to be widely accepted by the people as there are no traces of any class struggle excepting the founding of sects

like Lingayat in Kanara in the 12th centuary AD. This is presumed to be the only known anti-brahamana movement of its kind.[30]

The later restrictions on inter-caste marriage and impurity of the sudrahood were also in accordance with the preachings of the older *smritis* and not any radical innovations. It is felt that of the old social restrictions and disabilities mark "India's supreme effort on the intellectual plane to the meet the challenge (the most formidable she had encountered so far) to the existence of her soul and her culture presented by the destructive inroads of the new invading races with their programme of wholesale subversion of the indigenous social and religious order.[31]

The brahamanas, who were at the top of the social ladder, were found of the refinements of learning and were satisfied in living a life of continence and of seclusion. They remained unmoved by 'honour or reproach' and their fame spread far and wide. They were treated ceremoniously by the princes of the land and could not be ordered to attend the court. Relying on perfect virtue they concentrated on the cultivation of arts and sciences and did not mind to lead life of hardship. "Though their family be in affluent circumstances, such men make up their minds to be like vagrants and get their food by begging as they go about. With them there is honour in knowing truth (in having wisdom)

and there is no disgrace in being destitute…"[32]

During the period under review (600-1200AD) among the Kshatriyas the Rajputs became the shield anchor of the Hindu society. In fact many apparent complications in the caste system were due to their emergence as a class in the Indian Society. They included a section of the foreigners whose influx had been admitted into the Indian framework of caste. Some of the earlier foreign immigrants rank as low grade kshatriyas in the legal codes. But those who came after the eclipse of the early Gupta empire and established principalities independent, normally found a place among the thirty six clans of the Rajputs.[33] The visas were composed of those who tilled the land and carried on trade. With the passage of time they came to control the state purse.

Sharply distinguished from the upper classes were the *chandalas*, who lived in separate quarters, away from others and struck a piece of wood to warn people when they entered the market place. The existence of impure or untouchable castes is vouched by Alberuni. Even the foreigners were regarded as maleccha or impure; any contract with them was forbidden "be it by sitting, eating and drinking with them, because thereby, they (Hindus) think, they would be polluted.[34] This ascertain of Alberuni appears to be correct although it is contrary to the situation prevailing in the proceeding centuries. We find that one of the chief

distinctions of Indo-Aryan culture was its catholicity and a great power of assimilation. After coming in its touch the greeks, the Sakas, the Parthians, the Kushanas, and the Hunas, had all merged in the mainstream of Indian society. The last crowing act of Hindu catholicity was its absorption of Buddhism.[35]

Whatever the merits of the caste system in the beginning, the rigid caste system did irreparable damage to the Indian Society. The division of people into close compartments hit at the very root of national and patriotic sentiments, so much so that various provinces of India came to be regarded as foreign countries by the people of other regions. For example, when Harsha of Kashmir (1089-1101 AD) wanted to get rid of Kandarpa and besieged him at the fort of Lahora, the latter thus spoke to the King's emissaries: "The King, whose mind is ruled (by others), should send my family (to me). Then I shall deliver the castle and go abroad." Having been jointed by his relations, he proceeded to Varanasi.[36]

The alleged invitation extended to Muhammad Ghori by Raja Chakradev of Jammu towards the close of our period, may also prove the point. Like mediaeval Europe India too came to be divided horizontally.

Whereas in European countries class interests came to subordinated to the national interests, nothing of the sort happened in India. The class interests were perpetually kept alive by the caste system. To cap it all,

"The caste system with its superstitious outgrowths and purificatory ceremonials, brought about that narrowness of outlook and haughty exclusiveness which have been noticed by Alberuni.[37] Prohibiting foreign travel and intercourse with outsiders caused among other things, the political downfall of India. This point will be discussed fully in a later chapter.

Religion and Outlook towards Life

The Gupta Age is usually regarded as an era of *brahmanical* revival. Although some of the rulers claimed to have revived Hinduism, yet truly speaking, it was a period of culmination of florescence rather than of renaissance."[38] The most important feature of religious life during the Gupta period was the commencement of *bhakti* (intense devotion to God) and the love of fellow beings. These became most manifest elements of Saivism and *Vaisnavism*, expounded by the Gita and the *Sveasvatra upanisada*. There was widespread feeling of tolerance, peace and amity among various sects. People practiced charity and had, except the low castes and had, except the low castes, accepted non-violence as the creed.

Bana Bhatta, the celebrated court writer of Harshvardhana, mentions Jains of both sects Digambaras and Svetambars; *Vaisnavas*, both Bhagvatas and Pancharatras. He also mentions Saugatas or

Buddhists, Maskarins and adherents of various philosophical schools including Sankhya, the Lokayatika, the Vaisesika, the followers of Vedanta and Nyaya. Bhddhism was generally losing ground; its monasteries in the north-west might have been destroyed by the Hunas. With the deification and acceptance of Buddha as an in carnation of Narayana-Vishnu, by the Vaisnavite pantheon there was little of distinction between the Buddhist laity and his *brahmanical* gods. The growth of Tantricism reduced a great deal of distinction between Vajrayana Buddhism and certain types of Salvism and Saktism. The rise of saint-poets who were also zealous reformers and worshippers of Vishnu and Shiva, did yeoman's service to Hinduism. With the demolition of once imposing Buddhist establishment by a new rare of conquerors, in the 12th century AD and thereafter, Buddhism vanished from the land of its birth. Although Buddhism was now dead and gone, yet the legacy of abject surrender to the invaders that it left in India continued to have its reverberations, at least in the first two centuries of our period. In this connection an episode recorded by Yuan Chwang may be of some interest. When the Huna tyrant Mihirakula attacked the kingdom of Baladitya, the latter said to his ministers," "I hear that these thieves are coming and I cannot fight with them (their troops); by the permission of my ministers, I will conceal my poor person among the bushes of the morases".[39] Mihirakula did come following him to the

morass and was himself taken prisoner. However, his liberty was restored and he was allowed to go. What a devastating influence this episode could have had on military history and the thought currents in north India can be better imagined than explained.

The Jainism continued to enjoy popularity for a long time in Bengal, certain regions of Utter Pradesh and Western India. Amoghavarsha (815-77 AD), one of the greatest Rashtrakuta rulers, liberally patronized the sect. Bijala Kalachurya of Kalyana (1156-1167 AD) and Kumarapala Chalukya of Anhilvara (1143-1172 AD) were also patrons of Jainsim. [40]

The multiplicity of religious sects in India is attested by Al-Idrisi, an Arab traveller of the 11th century AD. According to him, "Among the principal nations of India, there are forty two sects, some recognize the existence of a Creator, but not of prophets; while others deny the existence of both; some acknowledge the intercessory powers of graven stones, and other worship holy stones on which butter and oil is poured. Some pay adoration to fire, and cast themselves into flames. Others adore the Sun consider it the creator and director of the world, some worship trees; others pay adorations to serpents, which they keep in stables, and feed as well as they can, deeming this to be a meritorious work. Lastly, there are some who give themselves no trouble about any kind of

devotion and deny everything."[41] Generally the people and the rulers were deeply religious except few exceptions. By the close of the 8th century AD the rigidity of caste system had grown complex. There may be some truth in the assertion of Elphinstone that the religion of the Hindus had become debased and their caste restrictions rigid.[42]

In spite of this social change Indians were not only inclined to justice but they never departed from it in their action. Well known were their good faith, honesty and fidelity to engagements. This is the reason why Al-Idrisi in the 11th centrury AD, wrote that peoples from all countries flock to India; hence there was all round prosperity. To bring out their characteristic love for truth he states that when a man a man meets another, who owes him something, he draws a circle on the ground and asks his debtor to enter the same, which the latter always does and he cannot leave that circle without satisfying his creditor or obtaining necessary remissions.[43]

Alberuni dialates upon the customs of Hindus on punishments and compares them with those of the Christians. These customs, according to him, are based on the principles of virtue, abstinence from wickedness and non-violence. So much so that they would make over their shirt to the robber of their coat, offer to him the second, who has beaten their first cheek, and to bless and pray for the enemy. "Upon my life this is a noble

philosophy," bemoans the distinguished traveller, "but the people of this world are not philosophers…Who cannot be kept on the straight road save by the sword and the whip. And indeed ever since Constantine, the victorious became a Christian, both sword and whip have ever been employed, for without them it will be impossible to rule."[44]

Non-violence, self-abnegation and self-sacrifice had become the guiding principles of life, which came to be viewed as transitory and of least consequence. Yuan Chwang in his travels relates the story of Prince Maharasttava who gave up his body to feed a hungry tigress. Stone tope stood on the spot where the Prince, pitying the feeble state of the tigress, pierced his body with a dry bamboo and gave his blood and the body to the starving beast.[45] It is recorded in the Yasatilaka that Yasodhara had to suffer grievously in many successive births for sacrificing even the past-model of a cock as an offering to the goddess.[46] The life came to be regarded worthless and its sacrifice an inconsequential act of human behaviour. The story of a Buddhist novice Adhimutta narrated in the Theragatha proves the point. He showed remarkable calm and eagerness to die when the robbers, who had seized him, were about to kill him for the appeasement of their deity.

The Arab traveller Al-Idrishi records that when a king dies they make a vehicle raised two palms above the ground; place the bier on it

along with the king and his crown and drag it round the city, with his head uncovered and the hair falling on the ground. The herald goes in front of the Vehicle saying. "People behold your king, so and so by name… He lived happily and mighty… He is no more, and all that he possessed has escaped from his hands. Nothing now remains to him… Remember he has shown you the way which you must follow."[47] D.C. Gangully quotes a passage covering the same theme from the Prabandhchintamani of Merutunga, when Bhoja was a child and was about to be put to death on behest from Vakapati Munja of Malwa, he composed the following verse, after reading which Vakapati withdrew his earlier orders: "Mandhata that lord of earth, the ornament of the Krta age, passed away, where is that enemy of ten-headed Ravana, who made the bridge over the ocean? And many other sovereigns have three been, Yudhistira and others, ending with thee, O King, Not with one of them the earth passed away; I suppose it will pass away with thee."[48]

Belief in Superstition and Astrological Forecasts

In this caste-ridden and religion-dominated society superposition and astrology clouded the minds of common citizenry, soldiery and the ruling elite alike. When Sindh was invaded by Muhammad Kasim in 712 AD, Dahir sent for the soothsayer, who after compounding astrological calculations, replied that the victory shall go to the Arab Army, because

Venus was behind the Arab leader and right in front of Dahir. On hearing this, Rai Dahir became furious. Upon this the astrologer advised him to order a gold image of Venus. That was duly made and fastened to his saddle in order that the Venus might be just behind him to bless him with Victory.[49]

This faith in conjunction of stars remained undiminished throughout our period down to the days of Prithviraja III. Prithviraja was given Mangal Panchmi as the day of battle; "He made incantations to Rahu and Ketu to remove evil and produce auspiciousness. *Asta Chakra Yogni* and the transit of Bharani are auspicious for war; Guru Panchami and Ravi Panchami are inauspicious for the white marked (Asta Mangal, a horse with white mane, face, tail, breast and hoofs) horse of the lord. Indu and Buddha make war prosperous with the trident and the disc in their hands. An auspicious hour the king selected and marched forth; the valiant one at the rising of Krur (Mercury or Saturn.)[50]

Economic Conditions

During the period preceding the Turkish conquest, economic prosperity of the country has been attested to at all hands. Agriculture was highly developed. The mention of a large variety of cereals grown and classification of crops and fields in standard lexicons prove it. Irrigation works like that of Anicut across Cauvery were also being

established in North India. Cotton stuffs and dressed animal… Skins produced in Gujarat, were imported by the Arabs. Gujarati ports along with those of the Coramandal Coast had become centres of international trade. The Yasastilaka faithfully provides us with adequate testimony of India's economic prosperity. Of particular interest is the description given by Somadev Suri of a mart owned and run by a priest for the benefit of foreign merchants to carry on their trade in India. The establishment was spread over an area of 4 miles. It had built in godowns for storing different varieties of merchandise and stalls for the cattle. Arrangements existed for the supply of firewood, water and fodder. The place was fortified and had moats, walls gates and ramparts.[51] The richness of the Indian Cities and elegance of the courts of Indian Princes has been applauded by foreign travellers and the records of the age.[52] Yuan Chwang in his travelogue makes repeated references to the fertility of land, the luxuriant crops and 'good' and affluent' circumstances of the people.[53] Rashidu-ddin, on the authority of Al-Biruni, paints a picture of India at the end of the 10th Century AD. He writes that Gujarat comprised 80,000 flourishing cities, villages and hamlets; the inhabitants were rich and happy.[54] The details of immense booty carried home by the Arabs and Mahmud of Ghazna provide yet another reliable measure of India's riches. It is; therefore, correct to assume that during normal times that land tillers had enough to eat and the country did not suffer at the hands

of Malthus' ghost of over-population. Contrary to this, evidence is available for the gross neglect of people immediately following the close of our period. The famines of early and mid-thirteenth century seem to have forced the people to have "either sold themselves or their children into slavery or even committed suicide by drowning themselves in rivers to escape the pangs of hunger."[55]

This miserable plight of the famine hit people could be a direct outcome of the war-ravaged economy of the country. The old order had changed. The fates of the people were now in the hands of alien masters with their hearts and thoughts firmly fixed to their homeland. They were not yet acquainted with the fiscal system of their newly acquired dominions in India and hence could not rescue the people from the hell of their sufferings. No such instance had been recorded by the distinguished travellers of our period like Yuan Chwang and Alberuni, and their knowledge and impressions about Indian conditions were not the result of any superficial studies.

Literature

Although the literary excellence of the post-Gupta period did not compare well with the standards of Kalidasa, Vishakhadatta or Sudraka, the age did produce outstanding writers like Bharvavi, Magha, SriHarsha, Kshemendra and Krishna Mishra. Lyric poetry continued to flourish long

after Bhartahari, and the 12th century saw the composition of Jayadeva's Gitagovinda. Creditable works in other fields continued to be produced such as Dandin's prose romance Dasakumaracharita, Somadeva's Kathasaritsagara Santideva's ethical compositions and several works on political thought by Sukra and others.

In the field of historical literature contribution of the post-gupta period is worth mentioning. Notable among these are Harshacharita of Bana, Ramacharita of Sandhyakara Nandi, the Vikramankadevacarita if Bilhana and the Rajatarangini of Kalhana. Bhaskaracharya, a distinguished astronomer, flourished during the Yadava rule. Towards the close of the age we have a number of polymaths like Bhoja of Dhara, somesrara III of Kalyana and Kshemendra of Kashmir, who showed their interest in diverse subjects.[56] It would, therefore, follow that during the period under review, there was no dearth of literary and scientific activity in the country.

Art and Architecture

Art and architecture provide a fairly accurate yard stick by which a nation's greatness can be measured. During the period 600-1200 AD architecture in India assumed an important role in the development of fine arts. Three major schools of architecture, viz, Nagara, Besara and Dravida developed in the period. The testimony to an intense outburst of

architectural activity is borne by the elegant temples of Orissa, Khajuraho, Rajasthan, Malwa, Gujarat and Kathiawar. The multifaceted development of Indian art is attested by Somadevsuri in the Yashatilaka, a celebrated work of our period.[57] The Kendariya, Laksmana and other temples at Khajuraho and the Lingaraja and Rajarani temples at Bhuvaneshwar may be noted as the finest specimens of the architecture of the period. The elegance and refinement of the two temples at Dilwara on Mount Abu is remarkable. "The rich exuberance of their decorative displays, almost super human skill, entitles them to rank as priceless treasures of art."[58]

Several schools of sculpture also developed in the period with their distinctive characteristics. Apart from the decorative patterns of plastic art we notice an exuberance of the cult images and other sculptures made in stone and metal. "Indian art offers the most vivid testimony to the wonderful resources in men and money possessed by the rulers….Amid and luxuries and comforts of worldly life, the thought of the world beyond never ceased to exercise a dominant influence.[59] However, with the passage of time and as a direct consequence of the Muslim inroads the original artistic sense diminished under the influence of religion, whereby artists became merely the instruments in rendering to order, the complicated concepts of religion.[60] U.N. Goshal thus comments on the

deterioration in the field of fine arts: "By the end of 12th Century AD, Indian people appear to have undergone a lamentable decline. Literature and art, it would seem, lost much of their old creative power, while religion lay encumbered by a mass of forms and ceremonies and society was fixed in a rigid mould."[61]

Hindu Militarism

The Vedas regarded wars as instruments of progress. Wars alone clear off the enemies from the road to prosperity. The Atharvaveda (XI.10.5) goads men for the holy war, thus: "Ye men rise up with your banners. Get ready; your foes are like deadly serpents. They are like monsters. Get on them…. Ye brave men make your enemies mad and kill their general with the half of your army.[62] Manu and *Yajnavalkya* lay down the dying in war was an act of the highest merit. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata equated it with a religious sacrifice; even the meanest when killed in battle earned salvation. According to almost all writers on Niti, war was mandatory for the king. War was natural to man and its absence for a long time was regarded as an abnormal situation. The literature of our period bears eloquent testimony in this regard. When Narad could not appease his lust for war on the earth he visited Indra in the heaven for this purpose. He was surprised to find Indra equally remorse for no warrior was coming to heaven as a result of their

martyrdom in battle.

The war was to be declared when troops were loyal and ready, even without a provocation from the opponent. This was rank militarism. Rapson, writing in the Indian Antiquary, observes that military expeditions formed part of the ordinary routine in a state where was regarded as profession and the soldiers were hereditary members of the professional caste.[63] The all pervading spirit of vengeance played havoc, "Let widows weep, break their breasts; let women with untied hair strike their thighs and bewail. Let wolves and crows eat the enemies…[64] so said an incantation of the *Atharvaveda*.

In its heyday, Buddhism did exert a softening influence on national mind and kings like Asoka came to eschew war and aggression. Asoka's was the lone voice in the wilderness of Aryan militarism. The only perceptible converts to the creed of non-violence were the mercantile classes who stood to lose from the wars. But it may be remembered that even Buddhism did not preach against war-craft. It is said when Ajatasatru of Magadha wanted to annihilate the vajjians, he was dissuaded from his design by the Buddha not because it was an aggressive act but because the vajjians were a democratic people. Obviously, the great lord did not oppose the idea of war.[65]

Therefore, was as an instrument of state policy was never rejected

in India. In the centuries following the death of Asoka, migratory influx continued into India aggravating the frequency of wars. It reached its climax under the imperial Guptas. Harsha followed suit. Yuan Chwang narrates that whenever a general was defeated in war, he was asked to put on woman's garments. Many a general committed suicide with a view to escaping this ignominy.[66] The death of Harsha once again threw India into the cauldron of internecine warfare and the spirit of Indra, the War God, did not suffer diminution. The Garuda Purana enjoyed that "A king shall protect his subjects with the cultivation of sciences of money-making and warfare."[67] Even Jainism did not abhor warfare where the prestige of the country was at stake. Although some of the Rastrakuta and Chalukya rulers were inclined towards Jainism, never did they discard warfare. Again, writing about Prithviraja III, the author of the Prthvirajavijaya, states "Good fortune furnished him with opportunities to undertake several wars.[68]

Death held no scare for a warrior. In a battle against Mahmud of Ghazna Beej, When deserted by most of his followers was about to be captured by the Muslims, killed himself with his own sword. Remnants of his garrison died fighting in a bid to avenge the death of their brave chief.[69]

Marital traditions virtually permeated into the blood vessels of the

Indian people. A mother is quoted as saying that she would mutilate her breasts if her son deserted the battlefield. Therefore, we tend to agree with V.R.R. Dikshitar's rejection of reputed Maxmullar's contention that the "Hindus were mainly a community of philosophers "Whose mind was bent towards the other word, and who did not attach any importance to things mundane.[70]

Notwithstanding its demerits marital traditions in India could be maintained throughout the age primarily because of the caste system. While the intellectuals could keep contemplating on philosophical doctrines in the hills and the forests, the traders in their shops and the tillers on their land, the life went on without competition. Life included a warrior's life. The Hindu genius set apart a whole community for warfare, which became a standing army of the nation. Every warrior was a knight by himself and when and when a war came there was no dislocation of the social and economic set-up. There were no food shortages. "There was no necessity for planning a new world order, as the old order was not affected in the least. It was not a people's war in which the king representing the whole nation plunged."[71] Although it is true that war was the primary concern of the warrior caste, yet the nation that it was the concern of only that class is not correct. We shall quote numerous instances at an appropriate place to show that the other castes were not

wanting in marital spirit.

Causes of War

In a nation where militarism was a philosophy holiest of holy, where there was a standing professional army in the shape of a large kshatriya caste or the Rajputs of the later period; conscription was unheard of; to start a war no specific cause or pre-text was required. At all times, conquest was the chief ambition of Indian Princes. The peace was to be maintained only by the weak; on who was strong must wage war; as war was a continuation of state policy by other means.[72] During the Rigvedic period we find that the extermination of non-Aryans who did not believe in the vedic gods, was considered to be an important cause of war.

However, with the Aryanisation of India, the declaration of war on the unbelievers was no longer necessary. As such Kamandaka does not include this in his list of causes of war amongst Aryans which according to him are:

"Usurpation of provinces, abduction of women, carrying away of vehicles and treasures, arrogance, morbid sense of honour, molestation of dominions, extinction of erudition, destruction of property, violation of laws, prostration of regal powers, influence of evil destiny, the necessity of helping friends and allies, disrespectful demeanour, destruction of a

friend and so on.[73]

The chief motive of war amongst the Aryans was the love of war-glory. War was considered to be warrior's dharma and was the love of war-glory. War was considered to be warrior's dharma and was good for its own sake. Battles were fought to appease sense of vanity. Besides satisfying thirst for territorial aggrandizement, invasions were launched without questioning their propriety. Excuses were concocted when required. For example, Kalingraja expressing his desire to fight, asked his ministers to find out an excuse. They advised him to send his daughters seated in a chariot to various villages and capital towns. The war could be declared on a person who would dare detain them. It was done and was declared on the Assakaraja.[74]

The women and particularly the *svayambara* ceremony (choosing of husband in public by princes) was another potent cause of bloodshed in north India. It is a sad commentary on Indian King Durlabraja son of Chamundaraja that when Mahmud of Ghazna was devastating north India, he should have quarreled over a bride. For, when Durlabraja won the hands of Chahamana princes in *svayambara* ceremony, he had to fight against a number of disappointed suitors[75] and again according to the Prthivirajavijaya, Kalvati, sister of Guvaka II (9th Century AD) had 12 suitors. She chose the king of Kanauj and married him. Guvaka had to

defeat the remaining princes and give their wealth to this sister as dowry.[76] In this connection the story of Prithviraja III's war with Jaichand over the abduction of latter's daughter is too well known to be recounted. The wars were fought not only for expansion of one's own territory but also to checkmate the designs of menacing enemy, who is equated with a serious malady.[77]

What could be a pettier cause of war than the one related in the Prabhadkosa. Kumarapala had a sister who was married to Arnoraja. Playing chess one day with his wife, Arnoraja while lifting one of the pawns said in a jest, "kill these mundikas, kill these mundikas." This was taken as an insult by the queen as the work mundika could also mean Gujaratis who wore no headdress an also their gurus with shaven heads. Being reported of the matter, Kumarapala at once vowed to avenge this insult.[78] At times, receipt of peculiar articles as presents with particular markings from the hostile kings were considered from the hostile kings were considered provocations enough for the declaration of war. Those were: considered provocations enough for the declaration of war. Those were: "an iron ball, then letter marked with the emblem of a sword on the outside, and the presents wrapped in four pieces of cloth; or according to another interpretation, an iron ball and the presents and the letter, both marked with the figure of a sword and four encircling lines." Somadev

Suri explains the significance of each in his Nitivakyamitra (chap. 13): "Now the iron ball symbolized invulnerability of the sender; the four wrappings or the four encircling lines, the four-limbed army… and the sword, of course, the threat of war". The result of this all embracing rank militarism was devastating for the country which had no central powerful authority to act as a deterrent element. The incorporation of martial traditions into the sacred law encouraged internecine warfare.[79] It protracted interstate feuds sapping national vitality. It allowed national vigour to run berserk and break glittering crowns at the hands of one another. It also made them succumb to the enemy blows one by one glorified by family bards.

We now propose to give a bird's eye view of the major events in the political field during the vast expanse of 700 years from the ascendancy of Harsha to the fall of Prithviraja III.

THE POLITICAL SCENE

The curtain rises with the young Harshvardhana struggling to climb the political stage of north India. After he Guptas, the Maukharis rules over major parts of Madhyadesa with Kanauj as their capital. The Maitrakas rules over Saurastra and Western Malwa and the Pushyabhutis or Vardhanas at Thaneshwar in the (East Punjab) Haryana of present day. The Huna incursions from the north-west had caused great upheavals.

Their advances were marked by rapine, massacre and incendiarism. Cities were bolted out of existence…."They valley of the Kabul and Swat rivers, one of the most flourishing centres of Indian Civilisation, was so completely devastated that the greater part of it has ever since remained outside the pale of civilization, fit only for the habitation of wild tribes…"[80]. The honour of becoming shield bearers of Indian independence at that critical moment devolved upon the Mukharis under the stewardship of the illustrious Isanavarman,[81] who succeeded in containing their turbulence to the portions of the Punjab. "The later Guptas could not help the disintegration of their empire due to the very ephemeral nature of their governmental system centered around the personality and competence of the rulers; political turmoil's in Central Asia whose reverberations were always felt in the adjacent lands,"[82] and "the outbreak of rebellion within, devastating invasions from without, the growth of a class of hereditary governors and other officials who commanded enormous influence in local centres… and dissensions in the imperial family itself."[83]

It was Harsha's father Prabhakarvardhana, who had enlarged the bounds of his kingdom comprising perhaps the whole of Punjab and a part of Malwa and assumed the imperial title of 'Paramabhattaraka Maharajadhiraja. After his death in 604 AD, when his eldest son

Rajayavardhana domed the imperial regalia, his brother-in-law the Maukhari Grahvarman was killed by the king of Malwa assisted by Sashanka of Bengal. His sister Rajyasree was thrown into fetters. Rajayavardhana was able to avenge his brother-in-law's death by defeating the king of Malwa but he lost his life; whether at the hands of Sashanka through guile or in adherence to a promise, is a moot point. Recovering from the shock and dejection caused by the death and murders in the family, tragic though it was for the Young Harsha; he swore vengeance and set out against Sasanka with a mighty expeditionary force.[84]

He succeeded in rescuing his sister in a short period of time. In accordance with the advice of Bodhisattava Avlokitesvara (Kuan-tza-tsai- "the Beholding Lord" of Yuan Chwang), he became king of Kanauj without actually using the imperial title of Maharaja.[85] Though he had lots of problems in his own kingdom, yet the desire of ending the order of small warring princely states and bringing them under one umberella, was roused in him. By doing this he would be upholding the traditional Kshatriya ideal of *'digvijaya'*- conquest of the four quarters.[86] "Proceeding eastward he invaded the states which had refused allegiance and waged incessant until in six years he had fought the five Indias…."[87] Harsha was successful in establishing his suzerainty over the whole of

Gangetic valley[88] i.e., the complete modern Uttarpradesh, a largechunk of Bihar and Bengal (excepting Karnasuvarna), Orissa, and such of the portions of Punjab, Rajputana, Central and Western India for which Yuan Chwang does not mention the names of other rulers. But the measure of his colossal political influence cannot be gauged by the mere enumeration of his directly administered territories. He rightly earned for himself, the position of the Lord of the whole uttrapatha (Sakala Uttar-pathanatha).[89]

It may, however, be noted that Harsha maintained a large army to which reference will be made an appropriate place. His army was far in excess and disproportionate to the size of his empire. In addition, he strained his economy to the farthest limits by making excessive charities.[90] In addition, he maintained big monasteries and lived with great pomp a show. Devraj goes to the extent of saying that "Having bled the peasant white for his military campaigns and for his insensate acts of charity Harsha left a trial of famine and desolation behind him. Little wonder that his empire collapsed soon after.[91].

It was an age of mutual animosity and strife. An outstanding statesman with a strong mace was required to hold a vast empire together.[92]But when Harsha died without an heir sometimes in 647-48 AD, the distant provinces fell off one by one. "What followed next was a general scramble to feast on the carcass of the empire.[93] Each petty

princeling tried to become an emperor at the cost of his neighbours. Empire of the later Guptas, in Magadha was revived by Adityasena, the Maukharis became supreme in Kanauj and in Valabhi, Dharasena IV became an independent king. Gradually numerous others lesser known principalities like those of the Gurjars-Pratiharas and Karkotakas of Rajputana, Punjab and Kashmir respectively came to the forefront. Thus was restored semblance of law and order in north India.[94]

Adityasena of Madhyadesa, had signalized his accession to power by performance of the horse-sacrifice and strengthened his position by matrimonial alliance with the leading families of his age. He was succeeded by Deva Gupta, Vishnugupta and Jivita Gupta II, one after the other, but the outward expansion of the Gauda kings of the east ultimately led to the extinction of the house of Adityasena. The kingdom of Kanauj, however, was soon revived by the legendary Yasovarman. He ended the career of the Gupta King, subjugated Vangas of eastern and central Bengal and reached Narmada, in the south Rajputana and Thaneswar also formed part of his empire. However, to the bad luck of north India the career of this illustrious ruler was cut short by his erstwhile accomplice Lalitaditya of Kashmir.[95]

In Kashmir Lalitaditya, of Karkotaka dynasty founded by Durlabhvardhana in the seventh century AD came to power in 724 AD.

His important expeditions were against the Tibctans, the dards, the Turks and Yashovarman. After vanquishing Yasovarman he advanced eastwards and trmpled Magadha, Gauda, Kamrupa, Kalinga, Malwa and Gujarat. He also defeated the Arabs of Sindh. It were the victorious marches of his arms, which after the great imperials Guptas, founded the most powerful empire in north India but this time with its epicentre as Kashmir.[96] Lalitaditya died in 760 AD and his successors could not preserve their inheritance for long. The conquests of Lalitaditya and later Jayapida (776-817 AD) brought in its train immense flow of wealth. The accompanying peace and prosperity contained within it the germs of its own decay. After the enlightened reign of Avantivarman constant rebellions and civil wars caused by feuds became order of the day. "Death, famine and pestilence stalked the land… and state divided against itself, resting on a shattered economy could not be expected to maintain the large territories."[97]

This is the time when we turn our attention towards the western horizon of India where the mighty whirlwind of Arab hordes had uprooted and thrown to dust the Brahman dynasty of Sindh. The storm which had gathered over the sandy lands of Arabia in the first quarter or so of the seventh century, soon spread in all directions. In the resultant spate it submerged countries from Iran to Spain. The Arabs and their

Caliphs fired by the zeal of Mohammed's new faith cast their longing eyes on the rich ports of western India.[98] In the course of their numerous futile invasions, they came to know much about the country of 'Sind and Hind.' From the reign of Caliph Muawiyeh (661-680 AD) onwards it became a practice to designate a commander of an expeditionary force as Governor of Sindh in advance. Hajjaj was appointed governor of 'Iraq, Hind and Sind' by the Khalifa Abdul Malik, son of Marwan long before the alleged act of piracy near the port of Debal. Piracy, if it is occurred, came in very conveniently to serve as a pretext of holy war against Sindh where the Arabs had miserably failed for almost seventy years.[99]

A word about Al-Hjjaaj and his capabilities, He was a school master of Al-Taif in al-Hijaj who had exchanged his pen with sword to serve as a pillar for the tottering Umayyad Crown. Abdullah ibn al-zubayr, a pretender, who had for nine years held the 'title and power of Caliph,' lay dead at his feet and upon his corpse he ascended to the governorship of Arabia. "In fact, no head proved too mighty… to crush, no neck too high for him to reach….Human lives to the number of 120,000 are said to have been sacrificed by the governor of Al-Iraq, who is represented by the Arab historians…as a blood thirsty tyrant, a veritable Nero…"[100]

In the eight century, India had multiple divisions and subdivision

with fluid political boundaries. Geographically isolated, with no hope of assistance from the main land, Sindh presented an attractive objective to the war thirsty Arabs. "Sind under Dahar was a ramshackle political organization, utterly wanting in cohesion and inhabited by a heterogeneous population. A feudal state…whose governors were so independent of each other and of the central authority, their only liability, when they chose to fulfil it, was to render military assistance to the king of Sind…"[101] Sindh fell, therefore, to the youthful Kasim's disciplined soldiers who were determined to conquer or die for the faith. Dahar was too weak to stem the high tide of Arab invasion.[102] Sindh fell but the Arabs, inspite of best of their efforts, could not make wider dent in the body-armour of India proper. Seeing the performance of Arab army elsewhere, the historians have shown surprise over this unusual phenomenon in India. But this is not so. "The real matter of surprise, however is that the vestige of Arab Authority, continued in Sindh for three hundred years.[103] Even the Muslims felt that the Gujar-Pratiharas could have easily conquered strategically vital Multan, which dominated all routes of ingress from the north-west. They hesitated in doing so for fear of destruction of holy images at the Muslim hands at a Multan temple. It be trays their lack of intelligence about the happenings in the neighbouring kingdoms. They were devoid of foresight and statesmanship. They could have forestalled and thwarted Muslim designs

of the 10th-12th centuries if only they could see beyond their frontiers.[104]

The Gurjara-Pratiharas

The formidable Arabs were stopped at the gates of India by the mighty Gurjara-Pratiharas who had settled in Rajputana a century and a half before them. There is ample evidence to show that the Arabs did all within their means to extend their stronghold in India but the Pratiharas stood as bulwark of Indian defence against them. It was Pratihara Nagabhatta and also Chalukya king of Badami who successfully barred the Muslim entry into northern India and Deccan respectively. They beat back a powerful Arab expeditionary force of 725AD which had overrun Kutch, Kathiawar peninsula, northern Gujarat and southern Rajputana.[105] By 836 AD the Pratihara dynasty was firmly established in Kanauj and before the end of the 9th century their commands were obeyed all over the territory stretching from Pehoa in Haryana to Deogarh in central India, and from Una in Kathiwar to Paharpur in north Bengal.[106]

The Palas

Bengal had lost its political cohesion after the death of Sasanka. At the beginning of eighth century, a king of Shaila dynasty was rolling over Bengal when it was invaded by Yashovarman and Lalitaditya. They were followed by a king named Harsha, probably of Kamrupa. These foreign incursion set in complete lawlessness in Bengal. Each landlord

established an independent principally. Out of this anarchy rose Gopala, elected by all barons. According to Dharmpala's declaration, the crown was offered to his father Gopala because of the people's apprehensions that in the absence of a king. They would become victims of the application of the principle of *Matsya Nyaya* and lose their identity. Gopala finally beat down the dust raised by clash of arms during the preceding period of chaos. As his and his successor's names end with the word Pala, the dynasty founded by him came to be known as the Pala dynasty. However, it was left to Dharampala, son and successor of Gopala to raise his kingdom to dizzy heights of greatness and splendour.[107]

At a time when the Palas were busy in founding a great empire in the east, the same processes were at work in the west under Vatsaraja, a Pratihara king one of whose known dates is 738 AD. As the Palas wanted to expand west ward and the Pratiharas eastwards, they were bound to clash sooner or later. The flight took place somewhere in the Gangetic-Jamuna Doab, in which the 'doorkeeper' Vatsaraja beat up the intruder Gopala or most likely his son Dharampala. This germinated a perpetual animosity between the two giants of north India. while the close boxing-bout was on between the two contenders, a third heavy weight champion, the King Dhruva of the Rastrakutas of Deccan, appeared to claim the

'National title'. Not able to bear incessant rain of blows, Vatsaraja ran away to hide himself in a safe corner of Rajasthan, whereas Dharampala curled his head within his Gauda hood. Thus commenced that protracted tripartite conflict for empire among Gurjara-Pratiharas, Palas and the Rastrakutas, which marked political turmoil of the 10th century. AD.[108] Al-Masudi lauds Prathihara kingdom, in the first few years of the 10th century (915-16 AD) but the fact remains that Mahipala had to pay heavily for his inherited hostility against the Rastrakutas. The vast kingdom of Bhoja and Mahendrapala finally lay prostrate at the feet of the Rastrakuta Indra III. The consequent loss of prestige suffered by the Pratiharas could not be regained by them. This led to the assertion of independence by their vassals. The authors of 'The Age of Imperial Kanauj' are right in their assertion that the Gurjara-Pratihara Empire and not that of Harsha was the last great empire in northern India before its conquest by the Turks. It even equaled the great Gupta Empire. Their greatest contribution to India was the effective check which the Pratiharas placed on the ambitious designs of the Muslims beyond the limits of Sindh. In the tripartite struggle, mentioned above, each one of them, "Like the waves of the sea rose to the highest point only to break down, the Pratiharas had a longer spell of success than either of their rivals…."[109] Among the powers, which rose over effete Gurjara Pratihara empire, were the Chandellas, Parmaras, Kalachuris, Chaulukyas,

Chahamanas, Guhilas and a score of small families. Not going into their detailed history, we shall make a passing reference to those who rose to exert some influence on the under- current of north Indian History of our Age.

In the period before the rise of Sultan Mahmud to power, Chandellas of Jajakabhukti (Bundelkhand) under Dhanga (954-1008 AD) and Parmara Vakpati Munja (974-995 AD) deserve special mention.

The Chandella power rapidly increased under Dhanga in the South central of northern India. The territories of Dhanga came to be bounded by Jamuna in the north, son on the east and Chambal in the west. But before he could extend his dominion in the North West, the Turks, like vultures, had fallen on the Indian frontier in that direction.[110] It may be noted that the Chandellas were very suspicious of the designs of eastern states and always adopted a policy of crippling their resources like the Gurjara-Pratiharas. In their aggressive wars although they did not occupy Gauda, yet "their invasions created a situation in which it was possible for another family to occupy the territory of Bengal."[111]

Munja Paramara, was one of the greatest generals of his age. He fought all his life, and defeated among others Kalachuri Yuvaraja II, Guhilas of Medarata and Chahamanas of Nadol. His end came as a result of his own folly in flouting well known military principle of advancing

too far from his firm base. He was captured by Talia II and put to most tragic death,[112] the reference to which shall be made in another chapter. The Kalachuris, whose founder was Kokalla I in or about 845 AD rose to be a big power for only a short period and later remained confined to Madhyadesa only.[113]

Mulraja founded Chalukya dynasty sometimes in 942 AD with his capital at Anahilpataka. He was no great general but had lot of doggedness to preserve inspite of having been defeated by Munja and later by Kalachuri Lakshmanraja. His successor too had to wage defensive wars against the Parmaras and the Kalachuris.[114]

The Chahamanas (famous Chauhans of the late period) were the feudatories of Gurjara-Pratiharas and their most important branch ruled over sapadalaksa country with Sakambhari (modern Sambhar) as their Capital. Simharaja, whose known date is 956 AD, took up the title of Maharajadhiraja. His son and successor carried his victorious arms right up to Narmada.[115]

Another dynasty, which was destined to play heroic role in the Indian history later, was the Guhilas or Guhilots of Mewar. They were also vassals of the Pratiharas. It was Bhartipatta who threw off the Pratihara suzerainty sometimes in the middle of 10th century AD.[116]

Our discussion of the Indian political scene will not be complete

without a mention of Shahis of the Kabul valley. Their capital was shifted to Udabhandapura in 870 AD. Its founder Kallar is identified with Lalliya Sahai, whose glory outshone many rulers of north India, who found shelter in his capital city.[117] The Shahis waged a brave and relentless fight against the Ghaznawids who could advance into India, who found shelter in his capital city.[118] The Shahis waged a brave and relentless fight against the Ghaznawids who could advance into India only over their dead bodies.

At this stage we may also touch upon the institution variously termed as feudalism. The system as it existed in India did not quite fit with the definition of the term as known to the Western authorities. A.L. Basham calls is as 'Quasi-feudalism' where by Indians had a system of over-lordship, the vassals having their own vassals or pretty chieftains.[119] These jagirdar or Bhoktas had specified rights and duties. They received taxes, had title to the land and gained or lost power in accordance with the strength and competence of the rulers.[120] They were the source of strength when they chose to be loyal and when otherwise, brought speedy ruin of great empires in a matter of little time.

The brief review clearly brings out that towards the end of 10th century AD north India presented a spectacle of congeries of small states, "whose only political contact with their neighbour was when they fought

with each other or combined to destroy a hated and powerful rival"[121]

Let us now turn our attention towards hilly, could and not very productive lands along the North West frontier of India. Here the Turks were beginning to awake to consciousness of their newly acquired power which was to have serious consequence for India.

The Caliphate at Damascus had remained secure from the fear of armed invasions till the fall of Omayyad; where after, its seat of power was shifted to Baghdad by the Khaifas of the Abb asid line. This change in the seat as well as in the line of Caliphate saw changes in the political mentorship of the Muslim world. Persian officials, who were better educated and cleverer men, replaced Arab administrators in many of the key-posts. As the Caliphate grew weaker, Persians became independent and founded their own dynasties. Because of their fear of Persians and due to constant in-fighting of the Arabs of Mesopotamia, the caliphs looked for suitable bodyguards. The answer was not far to seek. The Turks, captured on the northern frontier, which were full of martial spirit and known for their hardihood, became hot favourites. Secured by the brave body of Turks, the Caliphs kept leading the life of ease and luxury. But "it was introducing the wooden horse into the Muslim Troy. The Turkish guards became the masters of the Caliphs; Turkish officers gradually acquired the control of provinces, and throughout the

Mohammadan Empire, from Egypt to Samarkand, Turks became a dominant race."[122]

Abandoning their native steppes, the Turks gathered in Persia and there ensued race for power in the Samanids kingdom. This scramble for power was in a way responsible for the Turkish invasion of India.[123] Alptagain, a high officer of the Samnids quarreled with his over-lord and moved to Ghazni a no man's land's and established there his own principality in 962 AD.[124]

Alaptagin's throne fell to the lot of his slave and son-in-law Subuktagin who was the first to launch an invasion of India. But it was Mahmud the son of Alaptagin who organized the Turks into the best fighting machine of their age and vowed to lead a holy expedition to India every year. "His iconoclastic zeal became nightmare to the Indian princes and has been very aptly expressed in the Mahoba inscription by the term 'bhuvanati-bharam'- his weight appeared too heavy for mother earth…"[125] For more than thirty years, the Turks under him "pillaged, burned and devastated the rich plains, cities and temples of the Indus and the Ganga Valley."[126] This was so as the people of the mountains were poor and the treasure of India presented to them irresistible temptation. "It was no wonder that they carried all before them, devoured the rich lands like a cloud of locusts and returned to their frozen homes with a

welcome, such as meets the mooring of an argosy."[127] As a result, the Turkish power came to be established permanently in the western Punjab and northern Sindh. Multan and Lahore became their forward observation posts. These conquests of Mahmud demonstrated the hollowness of Indian Political set-up and India became a preserve of the Muslim hordes two centuries later.[128]

Mahmud's sack of Kannauj in 1018 AD dealt the last great blow to the tottering Gurjara-Pratihara kingdom, on whose carcass the hounds of Chadellas and the Kachchhapaghatas fell to feast. With the passing away of Trilochanpala around 1027 AD, finally ended the dynasty of the great 'door-keepers,' who had fully justified their title by guarding the gateways to India for over 200 years.[129]

The raids of Mahmud's successors kept the Rajputs on their tenter-hooks. However, as the Turks could not produce a leader even half as capable as Mahmud, they failed to make any serious impression on the Indian princes who relapsed into their old pastime of constant warfare. The successors of Vidyadhara lacked his foresight resulting in their failure to benefit from the weakness of their neighbours and gradually started losing their territories to the Dahala Kalachuri who in this period produced two outstanding rulers, Gangeyadeva Vikramaditya (1030-34 AD) and Laksmikarana (1041-79 AD). The latter equaled the marital

feats of great Harsha and those of later Parihara Nagabhata II and Bhoja I. But all hopes pinned on him were belied. His empire like that of Napoleon tumbled with him. Gahadvalas rose where Kalachuris fell and occupied the whole of modern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. But neither Govindchandra nor his successors had the vision and capability of empire-builders.

With the fall of the Parmarss in Central India, the Chalukyas of Anahilapattan and the Chahamanas of Sakamari rose to prominence. The latter entered Punjab sometimes before 1164 AD and stretched their arm right upto the banks of the Sutlej. By doing so they put their hand into the waspcomb of the waning Yaminis of Lahore and Gahadvalas of Kanauj and Benaras. Indians were now to suffer fresh inroads of Ghuzz-Turkomans[130] in the last quarter of the 12th century AD.

Within ten years of the idol-breaker's passing away, his Persian possessions had been snatched from his successors. The Western Turks Ghuzz and other Turkoman clans led by leaders as capable as or a shade better than Mahmud in organizing abilities appeared on the scene. The power that destroyed Ghaznawids grew up in their midst in the hills of Ghor. A family feud between the Ghaznawids and the Ghur Chiefs of Firoz-koh, ended in the sack of Ghazni by Al-ud-din Hussain 'Jahan-soz, (the world burner) who "burst into Ghazni on a wave of slaughter and

destruction… of all the noble buildings with which the kings had enriched their stately capital, hardly a stone was left to tell of its grandeur. The very graves of the hated dynasty were dug up and the royal bones scattered to the curse…."[131] The idol of somnath and scores of other Indian gods defiled at the hands of Mahmud must have had a horse-laugh over the fate that be met the Ghaznawids.

India was now to witness the repetition of blitzkreige of the 11th century, AD. This time the leader of the enemy locust-swarm was Muizuddin Mahommad-ibn-sam, better known as Muhammad Ghori. He captured Multan in 1175 AD. The defeat of the year 1178 AD at the hands of Chalukyas did not dim his insatiable desire for conquest. He soon became the master of Peshawar in 1179 AD, which he took from the Ghaznawid Khusro Malik (1160-86 AD).

At this time, Prithviraja III (1179-92 AD) ascended the throne of Sakambhari. This redoubtable Rajput king was indisputably a great warrior. He held sway over vast territory including most of Rajputana. His kingdom extended from the Sutlej to the Betwa or perhaps to the Ken skirting the Jamuna in the north. His victories over the Chandellas and the Gahadvalas had raised him as a bulwark against the possible Turkish advance into the heart of India. Muhammad Ghori captured Lahore in 1186 AD and the swords of Shanasbanis abd Chahamanas were soon to

clash. The first encounter of encounter of 1191 AD at Tarain sent the Turk home, reeling and licking his wounds. He returned to avenge his defeat in the following year and settled his score at the very field. After the Chahmanas, defeat of the Gahadvalas was a matter of routine. The process of subordinating India was a long-drawn struggle, but surely it brought Muslim rule in India and the throne of Delhi continued to be occupied by Muslims for almost 668 years (1192 to 1858 AD). Therefore, while Mahmud's raids had left but a few scars on the body-politic of India, those of Muhammad Ghori, a man of humbler origin and a much inferior general, laid the foundations of a permanent Muslims rule in India.

A concise review of the cultural and military history of our period would reveal the dismal picture of society and political organization. While the literacy and artistic standards had shown some deterioration, the religion for a common man had been reduced to a set of superstitious beliefs with the evil of untouchability in the society. The Hindu society had been set into a rigid social mould in which everyone had to do and allotted due to the incident of birth. Politically, the country was woefully split into conglomeration of ever-fighting states. In the absence of a central authority, the ruinous concept of *Matsya-Nyaya* feasted on the fissiparous tendencies and mutual hostilities of the people. 'Law of the

fist' was order of the day. The right to survival was arrogated by the mightier and the weaker became merely matelotes to appease hunger of the big fish. The successive political doctrines of Sarvabhauma (ruler of the whole earth), chatruranta (ruler whose authority extends to four limits of the quarters) Chakravartin (of whose charka or wheel of the state chariot rolls everywhere) led to further enlarge the goals before warring kings who now set their sights at conquering all quarters rather than modifying their relationship from those existing between the vijigisu of a mandala to that of the raja-raja, the king of kings. With the rise of Sarvabhauma, the mandala should have disappeared. It never did. On the contrary it got linked with the Hindu theory of political Yajnas (sacrifices or rituals) like *asvamedha, rajasuya, vajapeya, purusamedha* and so on[132]. The kings, so as they become paramount rulers, went on waging senseless wars in their attempts to subdue those whom they thought they could. The price of such ventures was immense. The confusion was made more confounded by the onrush of the successive waves of poor, hungry, yet doughty warriors whose faith during this period happened to be accidentally, Islam. It is than against this background, or on this politico-cultural stage that we shall explain the intricacies of the simple looking art, nay, rather the complicated science of warfare. We shall thereafter, return to the discussion of the causes that led to the collapse of contemporary Indian arms against invaders from the North-west.

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CHAPTER–II
COMPOSITION OF THE ARMY

The state, according to the writers on ancient Hindu polity, was constituted of seven elements. These are: the sovereign, the minister, the territory and people, fortified city (to serve as a Capital), treasury, army and allies. This concept of seven *angas* or *prakritis* of state was also a predominant did in our period. A stone inscription of the time of *Chandella* ruler *Kirtivarman*, states that after defeating the enemy hosts, *Kirtivarman* ". . . rendered more prosperous the seven constituents parts of the kingdom (*angani sapta*) . . . day by day."[1]

The army was thus accorded a recognized position in the state-organism. But it is no where held up as the supreme element. In contemporary thought it usually takes rank as sixth in the order of gradation. There is a discussion in the *'Arthasastra'* (Bk VIII. Ch. 1) as to the relative importance of the army (*danda*) and the treasury (*Kosha*) & the *Kautilya* pronounce himself definitely in favour of the latter. "The Army he says, "may go the enemy, or murder the king himself, & bring about every kind of trouble but finance is the chief means of observing virtuous acts and of enjoying desires".

Later writers, though altering to the general principles of *Kautilya*, show a more positive inclination to idolize the army. *Kamandaka* (XIII,

37) for instance, says that "even the foes of a king, possessing an efficient army, are turned into friends; a king with a strong army rules the earth unhampered."

In the *Shukraniti* (Ch. I, II. 122-4), the relation of the army to the state has been compared with that of the mind to the man. As without the mind the human organism can not work, so without the army the state-organism comes to a stand still. "Without the army", *Shukra* writes elsewhere (Ch. IV, sec. II, 11, 28-29) "there is neither kingdom nor wealth, nor prowess. The treasury is the root of the army, and the army is the root of the treasury. It is by maintaining the army that the treasury and the kingdom prosper, and the enemy is destroyed."

Due to the paucity of military literature pertaining to out period, and for the reason that the year 1206 AD is taken as the closing year of ancient period in north Indian history.[2] We have been forced to quote from the ancient works an Indian polity. This has been done to make a point or to clear the mist surrounding the available evidence and to rescue it from the mass of unhistorical literature of our period. We find that some of the ancient Hindu traditions of warfare were still current in our period. In one of the *Chandella* inscriptions, *Chauhana* king Madanvarman's success is attributed to the application of six ancient *gunas*.[3]

The army was variously termed as *Sena*, *Pritna*, *Vahini* and *Parthiva Sainya* (royal army). Toward the later part of the 12th century AD *astra vidya* and the *yuddhatatva* (military science) formed an important course of study for the *Kshatriyas*.[4] So were *turanga Vidya* and archery[5] so that the latter came to be glorified like the *Vedanta* philosophy.[6]

FOUR FOLD DIVISION OF THE ARMY

In the Vedic period the army appears to have consisted of two division, viz., foot soldiers and car-warriors (*rathin*). During the post *vedic* period, however, the horse and elephant were incorporated in the fighting corps. Hence from the time of *Jatakas* there came into vogue a new category in Hindu politico-military thought. It is the 'four-fold army-*chaturangabala* or *chaturanga chamu*.[7]

The words *chaturanga chamu* or *chaturangabala* denoted the four fold army. The term became a general term for army having less than the four traditional sections, viz., infantry, cavalry, elephants and the chariots. Its literary usage continued long after the chariots ceased to be used for purposes of war.

The *Mansollasa* of *Someshvara* III, a work of the 12th century AD, continued the application of the term[8] although Chariots were not regularly used in warfare from the 7th century onwards. References to

chariots are not widely found in the inscriptions of our period. The *Bilhari* stone inscription of *Yuvarajadeva* II of 975 AD states: "Then having accomplished his object, the powerful lord of *chedi*, with all his elephant's feudatories and foot soldiers proceeded to . . ."[9]

Even in the earlier epoch the use of chariots seems to have been discontinued. In the plates of *Ishvaratha* (4th century AD) we read: "Having stated his good health (he) informs all his officers such as . . . those incharge of elephants, horses and men. . . "[10]

However, the inscriptions of *Yashkarana* of later *Kalchuri* dynasty dated February, 1076 AD refers to the traditional four member army; "the chief ministers of the lord of the earth placed on the throne his son *Kokalla* (II) lion like prince, the advance of whose four member army was checked (only) by (its) encountering the multitude of waves of the four oceans.[11]

Yuan chwang too speaks of Indian army as consisting of four arms, namely 'Foot, horse, chariots and elephant soldiers.[12] We also find the mention of four fold army in the *Devibhagvata Purana*[13]. Strangely enough *Ferishta* lists chariots in the employ of *Mehmud Ghazni* who is not known to have used that arm in any of his recorded Indian as well as central Asian campaigns. "On the day of his death *Mehmud* ordered a review of his army, his elephants, camels, horses and chariots, with which

having feasted his eyes for some time from his traveling throne, he again burst into tears…"[14] This enables us to hypothesis that at the beginning of our period, the one all important chariot as the fourth section of the army was not altogether dead.

It existed there, shorn of the importance of its hey-day and had been assigned to the ceremonial usage. It happened so, for sound military reasons. The chariot suffered from serious limitations. While its employment in plains proved it to be remarkably destructive instrument of war, it failed woefully when fielded under difficult geographical conditions. As the area of struggle for empires widened with the march of time, the principle of surprise became very important.

Surprise could be better achieved by the fast moving cavalry forces and the versatile elephantry. Both of which could operate in all type of terrain. The change came gradually as a result of experience on the field and the *Nikayas* provide early testimony of this transition.[15]

THREE FOLD DIVISION OF THE ARMY

It is thus clear that during our period the army had become three fold consisting of infantry, cavalry, and elephant force *Jaipala Shahi* opposed *Mahmud* with 12,000 cavalry, 30,000 foot soldiers and 300 elephants.[16] Before *Jaipal*, *Harshavardhana* in his Campaign had marched forth with a large army comprising of 500 elephants, 20,000

cavalry and 50,000 infantry[17]. The *Parmaras* are said to have maintained an army composed of infantry, cavalry and elephants.[18] The same was the position with regard to the *Chandellas*[18] and the *Chauhanas*.[20] At the time of *Vigraharaja IVth's* advance against *Hammira*, the *Chahamana* army is said to have consisted of 1,000 elephants, 1,00,000 horseman and 10,00,000 infantry[21]. This proves that the army of our times had only three branches and the chariots did not reaction as an affective fighting.

We also come across a term *Shadangabala* (six fold army) which has been used by the author of the *Prithvirajavijya*[22]. It also occurs in the *Skandhapurana*.[23] The two new wings were camels and bullocks. It may be noted that these additional wings were not employed for fighting till about the 18th century A.D. It would, therefore, be proper to say that the army of our period was generally three-winged. Some of other limbs, viz. transport and commissariat, navy, espionage department of scouts and guides of the *Mahabharata*,[24] were also being retained but only as a 'tail' to the teeth' of the armies. After discussing the fundamental principles of military organization in ancient India, it is essential to study at some length the structure of each of the above-mentioned four divisions of the army. As we have already pointed out, *Chanakya*'s *Arthashastra*[25] is full of interesting information in connection with this matter. It lays down that a horse-department must be well-organized in a State. It should be under the charge of a superintendent who should have the duties (a) to keep a

register of horses (b) to classify them according to breed, age, colour, marks, size etc, (c) to provide for their stabling, (d) to determine their rations, (e) to break and train them according to their mettle, (f) to provide for their medical treatment by veterinary surgeons and to arrange for the proper care of them.

The *Arthashastra* classifies horses in three types, *i.e. Tiksna* (fiery), *Bhadra* (gentle) and *Manda* (sluggish). Of them the first two types were used for military purposes. The horses of reputation generally hailed from country like *Kamboja, Sindhu*, *Aratta, Banayu* (Arab), *Balhika (Balakh)*, *Sauvira* and *Taikala*. The role of the cavalry included: "Exploration on occupied positions, camps and forests, holding strategic positions, water fording places and positions…destruction or protection of the commissariat and of troops arriving afresh, supervision of the discipline of the army; lengthening the line of the army: protecting the sides of the army; first attack; dispersion (of the enemy's army); trampling it down, defence, seizing, letting it out; causing the army to take a different direction, carrying the treasury and the princes, falling against the rear of the enemy, chasing the timid; pursuit and concentration.[26] With the passage of time, its utility in warfare increased considerably. War became a sport as the enemy at the long distance could be reached easily.[27] According to the *Mansollasa* "The cavalry is the key to the fame; a king in possession of the strong cavalry need entertain no apprehension

regarding his territory.[28] *Shukra* classified horses on the basis of the length of their head, the appearance of their face and the presence of auspicious or inauspicious feathers.[29] Another classification based on the features and size of the horse has come down to us from *Garudapurana*.[30] *Yashtilaka* describes best chargers as those having large foreheads, mouths depressed on the outside, smooth skins, stout shouldered, long legs, broad backs and lean bellies.[31]

About the armour of the horse and weapons of the cavalry, suffice it may mention that, the horses were, at times, provided with armour. The *Rajatarangini* mentions armour clad horses.[32] The coins of the *Hindushahi* rulers also confirm this view.[33] While forming an array of the horses it was recommended that the front line horses should be equipped with "mail armour".[34] The riders too had mail armour as is seen from the "bull and horsemen" type of coins of the *Shahis* of Ohind.[35] The leather cuirass so well known to the fiery horsemen of the scourage Chingez Khan was in the use by the cavaliers of the Kashmir.[36] Long lances and swords were carried by the horsemen; lances for the charge and the sword for the melee.[37] The *Banbhatta*'s *Rajatarangini* also mentions sabers[38] and stone inscriptions of *Jainad*, a *Parmara* king of the 11th century AD ascribes lances, swords and nooses to the cavalry.[39] But it is well known that the bow was not the chief weapon of the horsemen and mounted-archery was conspicuous by its absence in this period, introduced by the

Parthians and continuing for a time as a sticky exotic, it withered away shortly after the Gupta period.[40]

A lot of care was taken to train horse in the war. There were several forms of riding the horses. The military movements of the horses were of the following descriptions:-

1. *Valgana* (circular movements)
2. *Aupavenuka* (turning in circle with a diameter cubit)
3. *Vardhamanaka* (advancing and yet turning in circle)
4. *Yamaka* (running in the figure of eight)
5. *Alidhapluta* (running and jumping simultaneously)
6. *Prthaga* (movement of only the foreparts of the body)
7. *Trivachali* (movements of only the hinder parts of the body).

Besides, there were movements known as *Nichegata* (slow movements with the head and ears kept erect) *Langhana* (jumping), *Dhorana* (galloping), *Samjnapratikara* (response to signals), *Vikrama* (trotting) and other sub-kinds.[41] On marching time, religious ceremonies were performed. The horses were accorded an almost human treatment, which indicates the great value attached to them. Besides, the rules prescribed by experience and science, to secure the health and well-being of horses, some rites were observed to influence unseen forces in their favour.

The horses were regularly washed and besmeared with sandal, even garlanded twice a day. On new moon-days the sacrifices to the *Bhutas* were performed and on full moon-days auspicious hymns were chanted. On the ninth day of the month of *Ashvina* and also at the beginning and the end of journeys, the priest invoked blessing on horses by performing the ceremony of *Arati* or the waving of lights.

The vast cavalry forces grew inspite of the fact that the horses of indigenous breed were of poor quality. Nevertheless, it was thought that "The breed of *Kamboja*, *Sindhu,Aratta* and *Vanayu* countries are the best; those of *Bahlika*, *Papeya, Sauvira* and *Taitala* are the middle quality; and the rest ordinary(*avarah*)" Accordingly, the kings took pains to procure horses of the best quality from their breeding grounds. Sindhi horses white as lilies, swift as the wind, well trained, find repeated mention in the *Jataka* stories. Horses from Persia were prized most during the seventh century A.D.[42]

However the finest horses were obtained from Quital, Kandhar and even Persia. The rulers of Kashmir whose stability dependent upon the cavalry, spent huge sums in importing thorough breeds of foreign countries.[43] The superiority of foreign breed of horses continued to be held high in popular estimation even in the 13th century AD when horses were imported from Turkistan, Russia, Iraq, and Bahrain.[44]

The next important division of elephants also was looked after by a very well-organized department. The rearing up of a good breed of elephants was recognized as one of the special cares of *Chandragupta*'s Government. The killing of an elephant was visited even with capital punishment, which shows the great care taken by the State.

The head was *Hastyadhyaksa,* whose main duties were (a) to see that elephant-forests were well preserved and (b) to superintend the internal arrangements in the elephant-stables and the proper training of elephants by experts. The *Nagavanadhyaksa*, helped him in the first duty.

The source of the supply of elephants were, *Kalinga, Anga, Kailasa* (eastern portion of the District of Shahabad in Behar), *Prachya, Dasarna* (modern Mandasore), *Aparanta* (Konkan and Malabar), *Saurastra* (Gujrat) and *Panchajana* which supplied elephants of inferior quality.

Elephants were classified in four types, *i.e. Damya* (those that were tamed), *Samnahya* (those that were used for war), *Upavahya* (those that were used for riding) and *Vyala* (wild elephants, difficult to be broken).

As regards military training, the preliminary steps adopted were to accustom elephants to girth (*Kaksya-karma*), and collars (*Greveya-karma*) and to co-operation with a herd in a common work (*Yutha karma*).

1. Then the animal was taught the following movements of war:- *Upasthana* (rising, bending, jumping over fences),
2. *Samvartana* (turning),
3. *Samyana* (moving forward straight or traverse of making serpentine movements),
4. *Badhabadha* (killing and trampling down),
5. *Hastiyuddha* (fighting with other elephants),
6. *Nagarayana* (assailing forts and cities), and
7. *Samgramika* (other cognate movements relating to war).[45]

Once protectors of the war- cars, they came to occupy the proudest of proud place in the battle-array and emerged as champions of the front rank, nay, "the kingdoms of the kings depend upon elephants,"[46] declared *Kamandaka*. According to *Kautilya*, "the victory of the kings (in battles) depends mainly upon elephants, being of large bodily frame, they are capable not only to destroy the arrayed army of an enemy, his fortifications and encampments, but also to undertake works that are dangerous to life."[47] They rendered numerous and varied services in all operations of war. They cleared the routes of advance of shrubs and trees, helps in preparing camping sites, protected flanks, formed temporary bridges for river- crossing operations and other water obstacles. They

forced entries into enemy fortifications by battering down gates and other defensive works. They disarrayed enemy phalanxes by trampling, frightening and chasing them away. At the same time they helped Commanders in rallying dispersed troops.[48] In pitched battles, they served as vantage points for supervision and direction of operation. According to the *Rajatarangini* the elephant was used for carriage and for attack as well as defence. According to the *Somadevsuri*, "Elephants serve as fortresses in danger, as causeways in traversing waters, as houses on the wayside and as monsters in battles."[49]

As in the case of horses, so for the welfare of elephants also ceremonies were observed to propitiate unseen agencies. Thus *Arati* or the waving of lights was performed thrice daily in the rainy season and at the periods of conjunction of two seasons. Sacrifices to *Bhutas* were also performed thrice daily in the rainy season and at the periods of conjunction of two seasons. Sacrifices to *Bhutas* were also performed on new moon day and full moon day as also to *Sanani* or *Kartikeya*, the god of war.[50]

Just like the modern tank, the elephant had a number of warriors as its crew. In the *Megasthanese's* era the elephant crew consisted of three fighting men besides an elephant- driver. The sculptures of *Sanchi*, *Mathura* and frescoes of *Ajanta* depict only three riders instead of four.[51]

The *Mansollasa* tells a crew of only two warriors.[52] According to the *Agnipurana,* six warriors rode an elephant out of whom two had maces and hooks and they set on the neck; and four warriors behind, two each with bows and arrows and two with swords. The elephant itself was defended in war by a number of horsemen and foot soldiers.[53] Therefore, it may be said that there was no certain rule prescribed for the number of persons who should sit ride and fight from the back of elephant. The arrangement could be suited to the availability of war elephants and trained warriors. It could also have been affected by the tactical exigencies and requirements of the role allotted to the elephant corps in a particular operation of war.

"Mail armour (*varma*), clubs (*totra*), arrow bags, and machines are the war accouterments" of elephants, whereas "A hook, a bamboo staff and machines (*yantra*) are instruments."[54] The *Rajatangini* also gives the similar account that the elephants were protected with armour on the head, joints and other vital parts.[55]

The elephant rider fought mainly with weapons which could be hurled from a certain distance, they were equipped with daggers, knives and pots of oil, stores etc.[56] They had bows, arrows and quivers.[57] In the stone sculpture of *Begur* the leader at the back of the elephant is shown with spear in his hand and also had an archer in attendance.[58] The

bowmen have been described as discharging arrows from atop elephants in the *Shishupalavadha*.[59] The elephant driver had a hook or an *ankush*[60] and whips[61] to pilot the elephant. Besides, he must be carrying personal weapon for his own personal safety.

The elephants were decked with elaborate accoutrements. "Necklaces such as *Vijayanti* and *kshurapramala*, and litter and housings are the ornaments of elephants."[62] The elephant used to put on golden ornaments, bells, cloth coverings for eyes which was not removed till the battle began and its forehead were given attractive make-ups with various ointments.[63] They had a housing kept tightly held around their girths.[64] The elephant tusks seem to have been provided with some sort of shield which was made of sharp barbs.[65]

It may be an interest to note that the elephants were not only favourites of Indian rulers but also captivated attention of Muslim invaders. Mahmud prized them most and they were treated as rare war booty. *Mahmud* personally supervised the elephant corps which was administratively under *muquaddam-i-pilabanan*, a Hindu. He ordered the weak and lean elephants to be sent back to India to recover their weight and vitality.[66] That shows how much importance he attached to this arm. No individual was allowed to keep an elephant to himself which fell as booty of war, which ipso facto went to the share of the *Sultan*,[67] that

mean the King had the only authority to have the elephant in his service. Although the elephants were bestowed as marks of honour by the *Sultan's* of Delhi upon their *Amirs* but "it was a regal privilege which was jealously guarded and its assumption without permission was regarded as an overt act of treason or rebellion."[68]

The third division of chariots had developed its own technique. Chariots had four horses decorated with gold and silver. They had *Dhvajas* or banners flying on them. The Vedic-car was similar to epic-chariots in these respects. The description of chariots in the *Mahabharata,* however, shows that this division had come to occupy a more important place than even the infantry in the military organization.

Arjuna had his exquisite chariot with extraordinary horses, with a *Kapi-dhvaja*-banner flying over it. The chariot of *Bhima* had dark horses embellished with golden ornaments, a lion-banner flying over it and also a *Mardanga* or pipe that was blown in the battlefield.[69]

Chariots generally had two wheels and not four. Only *Ghatotkacha*'s chariot had eight wheels. A vulture was its banner. Lokamanya B.G. Tilaka holds that *Arjuna's* chariot also had only two wheels. C.V. Vaidya agrees to this view on the ground of an explicit reference as *Chakrabhyam, i.e.* with two wheels.[70] *Karna's* chariot also is mentioned to have had two wheels only.[71] The epic-chariots contained

absurdly large number of arms.[72]*Asvatthama* is said to have taken along with him seven chariot-loads of arrows, and other weapons.

Generally two horses were yoked with chariots, although sometimes two more horses (*Parsnivaha*) were kept ready in the rear.[73]

The last division of infantry consisted of four types of soldiers, i.e. *Maula* (hereditary), *Bhrtaka* (mercenary), *Sreni* (corporation of soldiers) and *Mitramitra* (friends and foes of triber). Another classification was twofold, i.e. *Anyagama* (soldiers coming from others) and *Suagama* (soldiers coming from the king's own country). Generally ten foot-soldiers formed one unit. An officer of a unit was known as *Padika.* A *Senapati* was commander of ten *Padika* and a *Nayaka* was commander-in-chief, commanding over all the army.[74]

Infantry is an arm best suited for close combat. It meets the enemy at an arm's distance, puts him to the swords or captures him. Infantry was very effective in those days, the battle of *waihind* (1008-9 AD) is a classical example to this fact, in this battle the *Gakkars's* infantry armed with light but effective weapons like swords, daggers and spears took on with Sultan Ghazni's cavalry and mercilessly slaughtered three to four thousand *Mohammedan* soldiers, it compelled Sultan to redesign his strategy.[75]

In the mountainous region the infantry with its light equipage and

ease of movement rendered excellent service by effecting diversions, penetrating well defended areas and laying ambushes. The most stoutly contested hill positions could only be reduced by infantry assaults. As with the difficult and rugged mountainous positions so with the forts and fortifications.[76] The forts were defended by the foot-soldiers from the battlements and parapets. As horses and elephants could not have climbed up the lofty walls of the forts, it was escalade by the lowly footman which amongst other things, proved most successful means of razing the fort to submission. The battlements of *Somnath* were manned by footmen and *Mehmud* had to bring forward his archers for clearing the walls of the defenders before he could order the general assault.[77] The digging of entrenchments, and the security of men and material of war, like *Manjniks* and catapults deployed against the forts, was entrusted to infantry spearmen.[78] The role of infantry in the execution of sieges was invaluable. They surrounded the forts, plugged the routes of enemy ingress and egress and reduced the besieged garrison to unlimited extremities.[79] The services of infantry were immensely useful in a country "intersected by rivers, swamps and canals," where cavalry was of least avail. The security of the camp against the sudden enemy onslaughts was vital then as now, and night watches were detailed to thwart any surprise raids or full-fledged attacks. Infantry, for its adaptability, self reliance and mobilization came handy for this purpose. The infantrymen acted in the

battleground like in the present era gunners do, by using bow and arrow very effectively.[80]

Now regarding the arms and equipments of the infantrymen it is observed that their weapons were light and effective, from the classical accounts and the bas-reliefs of *Bharhut*[81] and *Sanchi*,[82] it appears that they were generally equipped with Javelins, swords (used for close combat and with both hands to land a powerful blow), shields, but those in possession of bow and arrow did not carry shield. In the *Ajanta* frescoes the foot-soldiers have been painted with either swords or spears and shields. According to the *Yuan Chwang*, all their weapons were sharp and pointed. Some of them are these: spears, shields, bows, halberds, long javelins and various kings of slings. These weapons they have used for ages.[83] The *Ghaznavid* infantry carried bows, maces, short swords and spears.[84]

The payment to the troops was made regularly either in kind, cash or both; some share in plunder also was allowed to them. Besides, grants of lands were given to them in reward of their services. The widows of soldiers killed in wars, were looked after and supported by the State. On the whole, all members of the army were kept contented, a fact which was conducive to peace and discipline as well as efficiency in the military organization.[85]

The entire organization was under a *Sachiva* or war-secretary. *Chanakya* and *Shukracharya*, especially mention the office of a war-secretary, although in earlier records no clear indication to that effect is to be found. In very ancient times king himself was the commander-in-chief of his armies and all authority was centralized in him.

In the end, a word may be said about the existence of naval force in ancient India. It is generally held that "No naval war was ever fought in Indian waters in the early stages of History." Dr. R.K. Mookerji has scarcely made a mention of sea-fighting in his famous look, *A History of Indian Shipping.* Piracy with which the Indian sea-board abounded can hardly be regarded as the art of fighting.[86]

Of course the very appellation of *Chaturangin* denoted that generally the Indian army consisted only of four divisions. But still we are inclined to hazard the statement that navy was not absolutely unknown to the ancient Aryan rulers. We have already mentioned the existence of eight departments of the military in the epic-time. It included *Nava* or Navy also. Again of the six boards of *Chandragupta Maurya*'s military administration a board was for the maintenance and control of Navy. *Chanakya,*[87] also in his *Arthashastra* mentions the existence of *Audaka Durgas* or forts in water along with three other types of forts, i.e. *Parvata* (forts in mountains) *Dhanva* (forts in deserts) and *Vanya* (forts in

forests). *Shukracharya* as well refers to *Ambu-Durga* or forts in waters. The existence of such forts does necessitate the organization of a naval force.

In the Gupta Empire also we have reasons to conjecture the existence of naval organization *Kalidasa*, the finest gem of *Chandragupta Vikramaditya*'s court, in his allegorical description of his master's *Digvijaya* (conquests of directions) clearly refers to the facts that he routed the forces of *Bangal* which were 'ready with their navy' (*Nausadhanodyalan*) and implanted pillars of his fame in the waves of the river *Ganga*.[88]

The *Manjusrimulakalpa* a historical treatise recently discovered in Tibet, Giving a chronological description of various rulers in ancient India, incidentally refers to the military organization of *Rajyavardhana* and his successors. It should not surprise us that along with the fourfold division of the army it mentions also the existence of *Nau-yanani* or naval forces.[89] We have no information as to how the Indians constructed their galleys, equipped and manned them.[90] However, the *Yuktikalpataru* of *Bhoja Paramara* (1010-1054) mentions that a category of boats called *agramandira* having their cabins towards their prows was extremely suitable for naval warfare.[91] It shows the continuance of interest in this arm.

It may be mentioned that geography did play its usual role in determining the areas of navel development. Consequently, the maritime skills flourished amongst the people of South, East and West. With Eastern shore washed by the sea and its plains watered by the Great *Ganga*, the *Brahmaputra* and their off-shoots, Bengal was ideally fitted for naval development. Her people had become famous for their nautical skill right in the days of *Kalidasa* who characterized the Bangalees as naval experts.[92] The *Palas* exploited naval aptitude of people fully. They raised a combatant naval aptitude of the people fully. They raised a combatant fleet which, while sailing in the *Bhagirathi*, appeared as if a string of mountains had been sunk to make for Lord *Rama* another water crossing.[93] Towards the end of the 11th century when the *Pala* empire was at its lowest ebb, it was with the help of the strong navy that *Kumarapala*'s minister *Vaidyadeva* could restore law and order in the country. For this he had to fight a naval action against *Kalingas* ruler *Anantavarman* somewhere near the mouth of the *Ganga*.[94] The political successors of the *Palas- Chandras, Varmanas,* and the *Senas,* acquired not only their territories but also their naval traditions. They only substituted *Nau-Vyaprtaka* or *Nau-Balavyaprataka* for the erstwhile *Naukadhyaksa*, but continued to maintain efficient naval force. King Vijyasena is credited with dispatching a victorious expedition along the course of *Ganga* for the conquest of Western region.[95] Not only Bengal

rose to have a naval flotilla in the East but Assam also seems to have contributed in the development of the nautical skill. *Bhaskarverman* of *Kamprupa* possessed splendid ships.[96] It was reported by *Yuan Chwang* that *Bhaskarvarman* with his 30,000 ships followed *Harsha*'s triumphant march from *Rajmahal* (*Kieshu-ho-ki-lo*) to *Kanauj*.[97] Bengal and Assam's reputation seem to have continued even in the medieval period. *Hussain Shah* (1498-1520A.D) of Bengal reported to have attacked Assam at the head of his naval fleet.[98] The *Padshah-namah* eulogises the pluck of Assamese sea men of the 17th century A.D.[99]

It would thus appear that navy as an arm of military service, although insignificant and never in the limelight excepting perhaps in Eastern, Southern and Western India, was not altogether unknown in the Hindustan proper. However, it was generally employed for commerce and transportation of military supplies. No wonder then, the records of the period after the great *Kautilya*, do not speak much about the administration and functioning of the navy.

INTELLIGENCE AND SECRET SERVICES

"A good military leader must dominate the events which encompass him; once events get the better of him he will lose the confidence of his men, and when that happens he ceases to be of value as a leader. He has, therefore got to anticipate enemy reactions to his own

moves, and to take quick steps to prevent interference with his own plans."[100] Not only this, it is also a tedious job to know the intentions of the enemy because "You will usually find that the enemy has three courses open to him; of these, he will adopt the fourth."[101] Therefore, a first-rate intelligence service is a major requirement of an operational plan for knowing enemy's intentions as well as his reaction to our plans.

Although our knowledge about the espionage and secret services between 600-1200 AD is very meager, yet what we learn from the records of our period and knowing that it is indispensable for the effective functioning of a state, we may safely conclude that the service thrived whatever shape and organizational garb it might have assumed. Magha[102] and Dandin[103], the later Indian polity writers, more or less, stuck to the arrangements suggested by their master Kautilya.[104]

"A blind prince may see through the eyes of his spies, but an ignorant king is always in the dark,"[105] wrote the author of the *Garudopurana*. Bana talks about the employment of spies by Harsha, who were called *Sarvagatah.*[7] Dashmir had a regular department of espionage and the spies were veariously known as '*Cakrika*, *Pishuna* and *Pumshcalaka.*[106] The *tiksna* or fiery spies were employed by Lalitaditya Muktapida for the murder of the Gauda King.[107] During the reign of Suravarman II (AD 939), Kamalavardhana who had risen in rebellion against him, informed by the spies, immediately reached the gates of the

Capital to forestall any move by the king.[108] According to Somdev Suri, "in all matter beyond the range of direct perception, a king must depend upon spies as well as his own judgment as well as his own judgment as if they were his eyes.[109]

The spies were also seen playing their traditional role of planning assassination of a rebel chief. During a war of succession in Gujarat between Kumarapala on one side and Bahada Supported by Arnoraja, the former was informed by his spies that the latter had arrived with his troops on the western frontiers of Gujarat.[110] It is gathered from the extant portions of the *Lalita-Vigraharajanatka* that the spies of king Vigraharajadeva of Sakambari had gone and returned after collecting information from the Camp of Hammira.[111] That the enemy-information was collected with the help of spies is also proved from Rudradeva's Anam Konda inscription of 12th century AD.[112] The *Prithviraja-Rasau* informs us that, "Having come to Revatata, Chahuvan heard about the great Gori, that in great secrecy the Sultan has prepared an army; for his spies (*duta*) have informed him that the Sambhali Raja is enjoying fine sport in Revatata…"[113]

Mahmud of Ghazna had a full-fledged department of secret services called *Diwan-i-Shughl-i-Ishraf-i-Mamlukat. Mushrifs* or secret agents had been appointed all over the countryside to obtain useful

information through the agency of slaves, about their masters. Spies of both sexes traveled far and wide to gather information for the Sultan. A number of *Mushrifs (Mushrifan-i-Dargah)* were also posted in the royal court to keep a strict watch over the activities of courtiers, ministers and even princes. Special *Mushrifs* were appointed to write reports on junior *Mushrifs.* They were men of unimpeachable integrity and loyalty. They were well paid and had the privilege of being appointed by the Sultan himself. For the speedy transmission of information of spies, a regular postal service existed under the *Sahib-Barid,* who was the official news writer at every provincial headquarters. He kept the Sultan well informed about all happenings especially with regard to the conduct of commanders and other high officials. He transmitted his reports in cipher to the head of the intelligence service (*Sahib-i-Diwan-i-Ishraf-i-Mamlukat*), through ordinary mounted couriers (*Askudars*) and special messengers according to the precedence and classification of the message. When provincial commanders revolted against the central authority and did not allow free flow of information, the *Sahib-Barid* showed lot of pluck and ingenuity. He had the message passed through spies, who "disguised as travelers, traders, *Sufis* or apothecaries, carried the news letter sewn into the saddle-cloth, or hidden in the soles of their shoes or handles of implements of daily use specially made hollow for this purpose."[114]

It is only when we come to the period of the *Kautilya* that we find a regular secret service department became a permanent feature. Mention of a similar institution is met with in the words of *Bhasa*, who is now said to have lived in the fifth century B.C. According to this dramatist, these spies were the king's eyes, [115] who watched the movements of enemies and those of the king's subjects and aliens. They themselves moved about in the guise of madmen, mendicants, etc. Vatsaraja was freed from the captivity through the secret service.[116]

In the *Arthashastra* there are four important chapters on this institution.[117] spies in the guise of a fraudulent disciple, a recluse, a householder, a merchant, an ascetic, a *sattri*, a firebrand, a prisoner, and a mendicant woman were employed by the king. Being encouraged with honour and presents of money, they were asked to swear their loyalty to the king and his council; for it was the minister that set them on their mission. Intelligent cultivators fallen from their condition were employed as house-holder spies, and traders fallen from their professions as merchant spies. The *sattris* were orphans maintained by the State, while the firebrands were those who confronted wild animals in fight to earn their livelihood. Brahman widows were generally the *parivrajaka* spies, though women to other castes were enlisted in this service. Thus Kautilya distinguishes five institutes of espionage[118] (*samsthas*), the members of

which were sent over the country by the king to ascertain the purity of his own officials and also of the enemy.

These different spies were attached to one of the five institutes, and they sent information by making use of signs or writing (samjna lipi) to the officers stationed in their respective institutes. Intelligence was conveyed through cipher writing (gudhalekhya).[119] Some spies were sent to foreign kingdoms to secure employment, and these were paid from the Home Department so that they would secretly furnish first hand information regarding the enemy. These officials therefore went by the name of *ubhayavetanas.* One other business of these spies was also to discover the spies set by foreign kings. Spies under the guise of astrologers and readers of omens and auguries were set in motion to ascertain the relationship of the local people with foreign kings. By this means the king was asked to protect himself against the intrigues of foreign chiefs.

In a later book Kautilya furnishes more details regarding their functions.

1. Spies attending upon the prince kept as a hostage might break the agreement of peace.[120]
2. They might bring about the death of a fortified enemy by means of weapons, poison or other things. This was generally done by

firebrand (*tiksna*) spies.[121] It was resorted to in the case of obstinate enemies and enemies of a mean character.[122]

3. They helped in sowing seeds of dissension. Spies in different disguises, particularly of astrologers and sooth-sayers, gave publicity to their king's association with gods and his miraculous powers. They must further convert the people of the enemy by speaking highly of their king's righteous rule and parental care towards every one of his subjects. They bribed otherwise unconvinced persons by supply of money and grain, and created a split between the enemy king and his subjects.[123]

4. They were again employed to sow dissension among a corporation of petty kings and warriors. Spies found out, by access to these kinds, the jealousy, hatred, and other misunderstandings existing between them and any planned dissensions saying, 'This chief desired you.'[124]

5. Spies again might lure an enemy, in the guise of ascetics of miraculous powers or by disguising themselves as fire-god and *Naga* gods. Reports were taken to the enemy king about them and persuading him to visit the place he might be slain.[125]

6. They carried on other intrigues by deluding the enemy king within the sight of a beautiful elephant if he was fond of elephants, with

lovely women if he was fond of women, with a hidden treasure if he was fond of wealth, and by striking him down on such occasions.[126]

7. In the course of siege operations, spies disguised as hunters stood at the gate of a besieged fortress and pretended to sell meat, thus making friends with the sentinels stationed at the gate. Winning their confidence and diverting their attention, they caused the gates to be opened, and when that was done, the spies struck the enemy with the help of men secretly kept ready.[127]

8. In the case of a powerful enemy, spies in the service of the enemy from the conqueror's kingdom may seduce the wild tribes, with prospects of plunder and power, to devastate the enemy's country, Or they may create a division between the king and the commanders of the army, and bring about the death of the commander-in-chief.[128]

9. The conqueror's spies residing as traders in the enemy's forts and as householder-spies might bring about the destruction to the enemy's source of supply, stores and granaries.[129]

10. Lastly, they encouraged their army and frightened the enemy ranks. This was often done by soothsayers and astrologers who were, to

all intents and purposes, spies of the conqueror. They described heaven as their goal and hell as the goal of the enemy.

It is further prescribed that in meeting his spies, the king should be well armed, as he should meet them only at night. Dishonest and misbehaving spies were subject to punishment. But true and honest officials were protected during the period of their active service. In this way Kautilya speaks of a number of spies in different disguises and professions who were entrusted with onerous responsibilities and obligations and on whose work rested the weal or woe of the conqueror's kingdom. The description shows an elaborate network of the spy system.

In the post- Kautilyan period the old institution worked regularly. In the *Mudraraksasa* there is mention of an elaborate system of empionage.[130] In Kalidasa's works we meet with the care in several places. The Parivrajaka in the *Malavikagnimitra* shows the existence of female spies, as was noticed in the Kautilya. In the Puranas[131] where polity is dealt with, and also in law-books like those of Brhaspati,[132] Manu[133] and Visnu,[134] there are similar details with regard to the qualifications of these spies.

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CHAPTER–III
MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

IN PEACE TIMES
Composition and Recruitment

The assertion of Arabs that excepting Balhara no other Indian king maintained standing array, is baseless. The fact is that most of the leading dynasties of the period had large standing armies. We have already noted that Harsha had commenced his career of conquest with a huge army which he enlarged by raising the strength of cavalry to 1,00,000 and the elephantry to 60,000 and put it on a permanent footing.[1] The Gurjar-Pratiharas of the 10th century AD maintained four gigantic armies numbering seven to nine lakhs "the army of the north wars against the prince of Multan ….The army of the south fights against the Balhara, king of Mankir. The other two armies march to meet enemies in every direction." [2] Reference has already been made to the strength of Jaipals army which has been described by Unsuri, the court poet of Mahmud, as "more numerous than the stars on the sky or the pebbles on the earth."[3] According to Alberuni, Anandpala Shahi was in a position to support Mahmud after rapprochement with him with an army numbering 10,000 cavalry, 200 elephants and 20,000 foot soldiers. [4] In Kashmir Jayapida's (751-882 AD) army consisted of 80,000 litres *(karniratha)* whereas that of

Jayapida's over a lakh.[5] The strength of the army of Vidyadhara Chandella (1010-1025 AD), which gallantly resisted Mahmud has been variously reckoned by the Muslim historians as under: [6]

	Gardizi	Ibn-al-Asir	Nizamuddin	Ferishta
Infantry	1,45,000	1,84,000	1,45,000	45,000
Cavalry	36,000	56,000	36,000	36,000
Elephants	640	746	390	640

The Paramaras 'even when they were on the verge of extinction' had thirty to forty thousand cavalry and a large infantry force.[7]

COMPOSITION

The armies were composed of the following types of troops:

(a) Regular troops.

(b) Feudal levies.

(c) Irregular levies.

(d) Corporation troops.

REGULAR TROOPS

The most efficient and reliable section of the army was formed by the Regular Troops of the state. This portion of the army was generally

composed of a professional class of troops who were either hereditary troops or were mercenaries.

Yuan Chwang observed that “the national guard (lit. Warriors) are heroes of choice valour, and as the profession is hereditary, they become adepts in military tactics. In peace they guard the soverign’s residence and in war they become intrepid vanguard.”[8] The hereditary troops were well known for their loyalty, swordsmanship and spirit of sacrifice. They formed the personal bodyguards of the king and served as the nucleus of armies raised during national emergencies particularly by small states, which could not afford the luxury of maintaining large standing armies. Not only did they compare favourably with the buccellarie of the 7th/8th century Byzantine army, who were the "sworn personal bodyguards of the emperor,[9] but were a shade better. Some of them went to the extent of committing voluntary self-immolation at the death of the king. The custom required that those who 'ate his rice' at the time of coronation of the king, must burn themselves with him when he was slain or was dead. They have been termed by Maserdi as "the sincere friends of the deceased, who die with his death and live with his life.[10] There are several references to this strange custom in the literature of our period. Upon the death of Prabhakarvardhana, the father of Harsha, many of his ministers, servants and also his physician burnt themselves at his pyre.[11] When Viradhavala Vaghela died in 1238 AD, "one hundred and eighty two of his

servants passed with their lord to the flames and Tejahpal, his minister, had to interpose a military force to prevent further sacrifices."[12] The custom is also mentioned by Abdul Faraj Muhammad bin Ishaq in the *Kitab-al-Fihrist* written in 987 AD, and also by Amir Khusrau and as late as by Abul Fazl.

In 9th century AD, the Abu zaid, an Arab traveler, wrote, “When they mount on the throne, some kings of India cause rise to be cooked which is then presented to them on the leaves of the banana. The king musters (on this occasion) three or four hundred friends (who attach themselves to him) by deliberate design freely, without anyone was being forced into it. After eating of the rice himself, the king gives it to his friends, and each one of them in his turn goes, near (him), takes a little rice and eats it. When the king dies or is killed all those who have eaten of the rice should burn themselves voluntarily in a pyre, to the last man, on the very day when the king ceases to live.…"[13] According to another Arab source of the period *'The Marvels of India'* compiled in or about the same period, these companions of honour were called *'balaudjers.'* After eating the rice and accepting betel from the king's hand they cut off their little finger and presented the same to the king. "From that moment on they follow him (the king) about wherever he goes, and overlook everything which has to do with him. No concubine is brought to his bed whether it be a girl or a boy, but they first of all examine them

thoroughly, no carpet is spread for his feet till they have inspected it. The king is served with no drink or dish but they insist it should be first of all tasted by whoever brings it If he (the king) dies they commit suicide; if he falls ill they manhandle themselves in order to share his sufferings. When a battle is fought, in the attack they cluster around him and never leave his side . . . ." [14] The custom has found mention at the hands of Kalhana well. [15] The bodies of these devoted soldiers existed in the courts of the Pandya, the Chola and the Ganga countries.[16] Marco Polo mentioned this practice in the 13th century AD.[17] However, the classical example of binding "all the descendents of certain families in royal service" is provided till as late as 1766 AD in the celebration of the festival of Mamanka, held twelve-yearly at Tirunavay in Central Kerala.

The respect and reputation enjoyed by the hereditary troops was so great that even the Muslim Sultans of Delhi ensured that only that person was enrolled as a cavalier, whose forefathers were outstanding horsemen and had never been accused of scheming and rebellion against the state.[18] The heredity of prospective incumbents for the armed forces has been given great weightage by another work on Muslim polity of early 13th century AD, wherein a large body of troops with no hereditary background has been equated with two or three hereditary soldiers.[19] The importance attached to the hereditary troops is not a unique aspect of organisation of

armies of our period. It is known to India right from the days of Kautilya who termed them as *'maula'* troops.

Because of their large size, the regular armies had perforce to be strengthened by enrolment of the 'foreign' element. But this was not true of all states. Because of martial traditions at home the Gurjar-Pratiharas did not need foreign mercenaries.[20] On the contrary; numerous states had to accept foreigners in their employ. The famous king Dahir of Sindh had 500 Arab troops in his service.[21] We learn from Narayanapala's Bhagalpur plate that the Palas had in their employ large bodies of troops hailing from Malwa, Khas, Huna, Kulika, Karnata and Lata.[22] The kings of Kashmir obtained recruits for their armies from Rajputana, the Salt Range of Punjab, Magadha and the Yavanas.[23] Yasodhara Rastrakuta's (Balhara of the Arabs) army comprised of Deccani, Tamil, North Indian, Tirhut and Gujarat regiments.[24] The employment of mercenary troops had been sanctioned by the *Arthashastra:* "when he (king) thinks that the army he has hired is greater than his hereditary army; that his enemy's hereditary army is small and disaffected, while the army his enemy has hired is insignificant and weak; that actual fight is less than treacherous fight; that the place to be traversed and the time required do not entail much loss; that his own army is little given to stupor, is beyond the fear of intrigue, and is reliable; or that little is the enemies, power which he has to put down, then is the time for leading the hired army."[25] In this

connection we may mention that the practice of employing mercenary soldiers was not peculiar alone to Indian princes but was also in use by conquerors like Mahmud, whose army was of cosmopolitan nature. Hindus had been kept in his pay and at one stage were commanded by a Hindu general.[26] When the Sultan (Mahmud) heard that I'lak Khan had crossed Jhelum, he advanced to Belkh with an army "composed of Turks, Indians, Khiljis, Afghans and Ghaznavides.[27] The same was true of Mahmud's successors. His son had dispatched Sewand Rai**,** a Hindu chief to chastise those who had espoused the cause of his rival. Five years later Tilak, commander of all Indian troops, had been dispatched to attack a rebel chief Ahmad Nialtigin and slayed him. A few years later Bija Rai, a Hindu general "who had done much service even in the time of Mahmud," was invited to return to Ghazni, Bija Rai had fled Ghazni in the wake of political upheaval.[28] Although, the regular army consisted of two types of troops viz., hereditary and mercenaries, hereditary troops were decidedly more dependable under adverse circumstances. It was correct to assume that "Hereditary army is better than hired army, in as much as the former, has its existence dependent on that of its master, and is constantly drilled."[29] Because it had its roots in the soil, its emotional, physical and fiscal involvement with the king or his cause, the hereditary army was instilled with unbounded loyalty and patriotism. Thereby it was possessed of unshakable will to fight, that we term as 'morale'.

FEUDAL LEVIES

The second major category of troops forming part of a king's army was the troops supplied by feudatory chiefs. This was in accordance with the terms and conditions of vassalage. According to this the vassals were required to furnish a fixed quota of troops for military service, as and when demanded or the exigency so arose. We have been provided with very valuable information on the conditions of military service prevailing in C. 1000 AD by Dhanapala's *Tilakamanjari.* The whole of *uttarapatha* along with chief towns and villages of Kashmir appear to have been assigned to prince Harivahana and the remaining territories to his companion Samarketu and Kamalagupta. They in turn distributed their territories among the *Rajaputras* according to their merit or eligibility. Probably those were the people who formed *'maula'* element of the army of feudal lords.[30] The Chauhanas had distributed among their *Jagirdars* a large portion of their territories particularly in Jalor and Nadol. This was on the condition that they provided a fixed number of mounted or unmounted soldiers, when *required* or paid prescribed amount of money, annually.[31] This system was continued with occasional disruption even by the Muslim kings of India. Writing on the administration of Delhi Empire in the period preceding the Mughals, J.N. Chowdhury asserts that during that period the king relied upon the fief-holders and the governors to

supply him with troops when needed. Balban depended upon this practice which was discontinued by Alauddin Khilji. Later, it was restored by Feroz Tughlaq, who parceled out the whole of Hindustan 'into innumerable tribal chieftaincies.[32] According to this system, when a ruler set out on a campaign, offensive or defensive, the feudatory-contingents had to perforce join his army. Samgramaraja (1003-1028 AD) of Kashmir dispatched Tunga to support Trilochanpala Shahi against Mahmud. "A large army, attended by many Rajputras…feudal chiefs, capable of making earth shake, followed him."[33] Therefore, reckonings of a king's military strength had to take into account the levies to be supplied by the feudal vassals.

IRREGULAR TROOPS

It has been seen that most of the leading dynasties of early *mediaeval* India used to maintain large standing armies. But along with this when grave emergencies cropped up imperiling national security, *the* local levies were raised in accordance with the old Vedic practice.[34] But the recruitment was always voluntary and conscription was never known in our period and even before. The recruitment was done publicly, for a specific operational requirement and against laid-down emoluments. Yuan Chwang tells us, "The summons, are issued according to circumstances and after proclamation of the reward, the enrolment is

awaited."[35] The Chahamanas, used to enroll irregulars, whenever their kingdom was threatened by an impending onslaught. These irregular levies were composed of all sorts of people, gentlemen and bandits. In a war between Jayasimha (1128-49 AD) and Bhiksu, a Challenger to the throne of Kashmir, when the latter marched on Srinagar, "with him then appeared such a mixed host of troops as one had never seen before, composed of Damras, citizens, horsemen and marauders."[36] This category of troops was recruited mostly by the feudal chiefs and there was no security of job for them. They were dismissed soon after their services were no longer required. As soon as Uccala (1101-11AD) had secured himself on the throne of Kashmir, he, in a few days "forced the Damras in Kramarajya to dismiss their mounted and other troops."[37]

With no righting tradition and scarce training, this category of troops presented a very unreliable wing and was more often a source of danger to own troops, “when battle was raging in all its fury, and unable to sustain the onslaught of the enemy, they easily took to their heels, leaving the rest either to die or to follow them in their flight."[38] Irregular levies, therefore, formed the most inefficient, frailest and undependable lot, who merely added to the mass. They provided weight of numbers without making any substantial contribution to the fighting strength of their side. It was a weight, which hung like a mill-stone, from the neck of

its master. More often than not they, like chaff, were blown away from the corn-field of battle by the whirlwind of raging combat.

CORPORATION TROOPS

In India, srenis or guilds played a very important role in the economic life of the ancient society. The first inscription referred to by V.V. Mirashi in his Corpus mentions guilds of potters, makers of Hydraulic engines and oil millers.[39] *Ganas* were the corporations of traders and artisans. Some of these corporations were very powerful and even became state within the state. A corporation of elephant drivers which wielded considerable power and influence has been recorded by the Nagardhan plates of Swamiraja. Its assembly was called *samuha* whose president and members of the executive committee were called *sthavira* and pramukhas respectively and included the *pilupati* (chief of the elephant force) and the physician of elephants *(hasti-vaidya)*. On the grant was affixed the seal of corporation.[40] This plate belongs to the year 753 AD or 641-42 AD.

"These guilds and corporations had their own militia which could be called upon to serve the state when necessary."[41] Therefore, A.L. Basham is right when he says that Indian army contained more than one type of troops and one of them was the troops provided by corporations.[42]

A leading military Sreni like the 'Swiss guard of mediaeval Europe'

formed itself into a quasi-military corporation. Its soldiers placed their services at the disposal of the highest bidder on the occasion of war between two or more states. They were the *Ayudha Jivi Samgha* (guilds) mentioned by Panini. They lived by the profession of arms and included Vahalikas, Yaudheyas and many others.[45] According to Monahan "Probably the military *srenis were* special troops who enlisted in the royal army under their own chiefs. They would be called *srenis* from analogy to trade guilds, and no doubt, "served for pay...."[44] They were perhaps like the corporation listed in the *Arthasastra* "of Lechchhivika, Vrjika, Mallaka, Madraka, Kakura, Kuru, Panchala and others," who served under leaders styling themselves as rajas.[45]

Second class of the *sreni* was the *kshatriya sreni* (corporation of warriors), which had settled down to one or the other art or industry and side by side carried on the profession of arms, like the *kshatriyas* of Kamboja and Saurastra who lived by "agriculture, trade and wielding weapons."[46]

A few examples of the guilds of this nature have come down to us from the epigraphic records. The Mandasor Inscription of Kumaragupta I and Bandhuvarman speak about the silk weavers' guild whose members were well versed in archery and annihilated their enemies in battle by fighting valiantly.[47]

The third category of *srenibala* was the militia maintained by some of *the* corporations or the guilds and could be ordered into service by the state when the situation so demanded,[48] as referred to above. The reasons for the maintenance of militia forces by the trade guilds were the protection of their trading rights, centres and caravans. These would have become insecure due to the ravages of frequent wars and foreign invasions. These corporations, then, because of their private armies, assumed tremendous importance from time to time, The corporation soldiers were recommended to be called up for active service when the number of such soldiers was adequate for internal defence as well as for aggressive designs; when they were required to fight against their own category of forces; when the operations were intended to be of a short duration and when enemy's intentions were not to wage an actual war but pursue a series of deceitful fights.[49] Although regarded inferior to the regular mercenary army, the native corporation troops were rated better than an allied army, because of their identity of interest with their ruler.[50]

These troops were, obviously, a source of strength to the rulers. They provided, without any drain on the states' exchequer, a body of combatants ever ready for war. The government paid only to their chief whose pay (8,000 *panas* per annum) was equivalent to that of the chief of horses, the chief of elephants and chariots as well as the divisional

commissioners.[51] The *Arthasastra* fixes the pay of trained soldiers at 250 *panas* annually,[52] but it nowhere speaks of the emoluments of the rank and file of the corporation troops. This practice is mentioned by Kamandaka,[53] and it also continued in our period.

The corporations were not only a source of strength to the state but were also at times, a cause of nightmare to the kings. The reasons for this were twofold: Firstly they being armed and having narrow parochial loyalties indulged in frequent armed brawls.[54] Secondly, they at times, could not endure calamities and were susceptible to enemy "intrigues and other passions."[55] It was quite a challenge to the mental ingenuity of the ruler to keep these turbulent bodies of men pre-occupied with the tackling of complex political situations. It was advised that a corporation of armed men should be provided with "a piece of land constantly under troubles from an enemy; the combination of corporations with a piece of land close to the territory of a powerful king; a corporation invincible in war with a piece of land, under both the above troubles."[56] The rulers made use of many contrivances for handling corporations such as sowing seeds of dissension, causing 'childish embroils,' occasioning "quarrel among the leaders in taverns and threatres," exciting "ambition, giving publicity to the acts of nepotism, destroying at night the things, beasts, or persons concerned in some legal disputes"; exciting love for and jealousy because

of women, so on and so forth.[57] All this truly brings out the seriousness of the menace posed by them to the sovereignty of the kings. However, in the absence of adequate testimony, it is not possible for us to fathom the extent to which these corporations were responsible for the rise and fall of ruling dynasties. They existed in the beginning of our period, but whether or not they were as active and exerted as powerful an influence as in the earlier epochs, cannot be vouched for.

As compared to this, the Muslim rulers laid a great stress on maintaining strong and efficient armies which comprised of four categories, viz., (a) the regular soldiers in direct employment of the Sultan, (b) troops maintained by the provincial governors, (c) special levies recruited when the clouds of war gathered, and (d) volunteers who joined for waging a holy war and for the greed of share in the plunder.[58]

CLASS COMPOSITION OF THE ARMY

There is no doubt that "of the four great classes *Kshatriya* was the warrior par excellence ... but all classes took part in war."[59] The two great epics, other literary works of the age and some of the mediaeval inscriptions speak of *brahmanas* who excelled in the art of war and held high military posts. Alexander had to suffer stubborn resistance at the hands of the *brahamans* of the Punjab. In turn, they too had to bear the pangs of terrible retribution.

"Their bodies were hung up for the kites and vultures by the roads to the unspeakable horror…."[60] As in marriage, so in the society, the *Brahmans* were free to adopt any profession of the lower castes. While upholding their undisputed leadership in learning, they became soldiers and government officers *of* all ranks.[61] Numerous *Brahmans* have been mentioned in the records of our period, as holding high military posts. Well known are Gopala, the general of Chandella king Kirtivarman and Madnapalasarma, general of another Chandella king Parmardideva. The *brahmanas* held high offices of *mahapradhana, dandanayaka* and *senadhipati* under the Chalukyas. Kholesvara was the minister-general of the Yadava king Singhana (1210-47 AD).[62] After the murder of Sussala, when the relatives of the king ran away helterskelter, the *brahmana* Lavnaraja and Yasoraja were among those who laid .their lives fighting gallantly.[63] Peasant militia of the Orissa state, during the reigns of the Kesari and the Ganga dynasties drew many of their recruits from amongst the *Mahasthana brahmanas.*[64]

Besides a *Brahman* the recruitment to army was open to all classes. The *sudras* were also not debarred.[65] The man who claimed the head of Jajja of Kashmir was Srideva, a village *Chandala*.[66] There were occasions when farmers, artisans and even carters were enrolled in the army,[67] and they fought with distinction. Tilaka, a reputed Hindu General of Masud,

was the son of a barber, "a good looking, and plausible fellow, eloquent of speech, a fluent writer both in Hindi and Persian and a master of dissimulation which he had studied under the best teachers in Kashmir. He is also described as 'proficient in amour and witchcraft and everyone was in love with him .... He was granted the distinction of the state tent and parasol, drums were beaten at his quarters... and his banners had gilt cusps."[68]

Some Indian kings were known to have Muslims on their pay roll. Dahir of Sindh has already been mentioned in this connection. Lalitaditya of Kashmir is reported to have Turushkas of Central Asia in his army. Harsha had numerous Muslim Turks on his pay roll.[69] Not only did the Hindu kings employ Muslims under them, the Mohammandan Sultans also did not hesitate to recruit non-Muslims under them. The example of Mahmud and his successors is a point in the case. Contrary to the preaching's of a later….Muslim work on polity[70] both Mahmud of Ghazna and Mahammad Ghori had mixed troops of almost cosmopolitan nature for military reasons, as "the preponderance of any one element would have been fraught with danger."[71] Besides, it helped to create spirit of competitive rivalry among different categories of troops. They vied with each other to excel in courage and valour on the field of battle.

Thus we have seen that the armies of the period were open

institution with no restrictions of caste or creed. They followed the dictum that "one should recruit one's army reflecting that such is the army of my enemy; and this is my army to oppose it."[72] And in this one could go to any length so much so that: "if he (the king) is destitute of an army, he should, as far as possible attract to himself the brave men of corporations, of thieves, of wild tribes, of *Mlechchhas*, and of spies who are capable of inflicting injuries upon enemies."[73]

UNITS OF THE ARMY AND OFFICER CADRE

Army is a large body of troops, a body with numerous wings and adjuncts. It is organised into small manageable units which are functionally efficient in war as well as peace. The organisation should directly contribute towards effective command and control for ease of administration, for quick marshalling, for prompt concentration and for smooth dispersion. Each unit or formation has its commander with a corresponding rank. To begin with, it was recommended that, "for every ten members of each of the constituents of the army, there must be one commander, called *Padika*, ten *Padikas* under a *Senapati*, ten *Senapatis* under a *Nayaka* (leader)."[74] This division of the army into a unit of 10 and multiples thereof gradually underwent a change. The lowest unit came to be designated as *Patti* which comprised of 1 chariot, 1 elephant, 3 horses and 5 men. The next higher units, which were three times more than the one preceding them excepting the last one, were *Sena-mukha, Gulma*,

Gana, Vahini$_t$ *Pratna Camu, Anikini,* and *Aksauhini* was regarded as the complete army and was ten times more than *Anikini*[75] The following table will clarify the position:-

Army Corps	Chariots	Elephants	Horses	Foot
Patti	1	1	3	5
Senamukha	3	3	9	15
Gulma	9	9	27	45
Guna	27	27	81	135
Vahini	81	81	243	405
Pratna	243	243	729	1215
Camu	729	729	2187	3645
Anikini	2187	2187	6561	10935
Aksauhini	21870	21870	65610	109305

In addition to the above the strength and composition of each unit has been provided to us by the *Nitiprakas'ika* which is fantastic. The figures given in this work are as follows: An *'Aksauhini'* should consist of 21,870 chariots; 218,700 elephants, 21,870,000 horses and 21,187,000,000 foot soldiers. If these figures are taken at their face value one army would exceed half of the population of the globe. Rejecting these figures, Gustav Oppert[76] ascribes this exorbitant reckoning to the characteristic delight of numbers of the Hindus. According to the

Sukraniti the aggregate strength of an army unit included 5 chariots, 10 elephants, 40 camels, 64 bulls, 320 horses and 1,280 men.[77]

In his explanation of the measure of an *Aksauhini*, Alberum has accepted the figures given in the above table when he says "A *ratha* comprehends, besides one elephant, three riders and five footmen."[78] Giving these basic figures he proceeds to give us the following table:[79]

Each Aksauhini has 10 Anikini

Each Anikini has 3 Camu

Each Camu has 3 Pratna

Each Pratna has 3 Vahini

Each *Vahini* has 3 *Gana*

Each *Gana* has 3 *Gulma*

Each *Gulma* has 3 *Senamukha*

Each *Senamukha* has 3 *Patti*

Each *Patti* has 1 *Ratha*

The strength and composition of the army units must have undergone change with the chariot disappearing as a fighting arm. Inspite of that the usage of ancient designation of units, appear to have been in vogue during our period. This is gathered from the account *of* the *Rajatarangini,*[80] as well as from the testimony of Alberuni.

MILITARY RANKS AND APPOINTMENTS

Out of the embers of battle arose the state and its varying forms of government. The king is, thus, the very legitimate progeny of war. He was the supreme commander of his legions. Fighting for the protection of his people and possessions was his most cherished duty. He was asked, thus; "of lion aspect, do thou devour all the clans (vis); of tiger aspect, do thou beat down the foes; sole chief, having Indra as companion, having conquered, seize thou on the enjoyments of them that play the foe."[81]. The requirements of war both of command and administration gave birth to high ranking aristocracy "Indeed, an aristocracy had no other excuse for its existence, if it was not military.[82] Large number of government officials, both civil and military, have been mentioned in the records of our period. Due to vagueness of terms and incongruities inherent therein, different authorities have interpreted these terms differently. As a result, a long list of army-ranks has come down to us. We shall, hereunder, try to cover only those ranks and appointments which have any direct or indirect bearing on the military administration:

Mahasandhivigrahadhikrita	:	Supreme minister of peace and war.[83] His role combined that of the defence and foreign minister and he accompanied the king to the battlefield.
Baladhikrta Kokkata		Military Secretary of the King.[84]

Mahabaladhikrita[85] *Mahasenapati*[86] *Kampanesa* *Kampanadhipati* *Kampanapati*[87]		Commander-in chief or great Commander. *Mahasenapati* was to be a man of "high social standing and not one from the gutter."[88] He should understand "the comparative strength or weakness of the enemy."[89] According to the *Manasollasa,* a *senapati* should be a man of high character, urbane nature, should have fortitude, be a matchless warrior, a linguist and soft spoken; of firm resolve, well versed in the deployment of troops, use of arms, art and practice of man-management and also sciences of astrology and astronomy.[90]
Kampanodgrahaka	:	Military officer under C-in-C. this term has not been used anywhere else other than in the records of Kashmir.
Baladhikrita *Senapati/Sadhanika*[92]	:	These were the general terms denoting a military officer or a commander who at times also performed civil administrative duties of *Araksika* and was put in a charge of a town along with another officer *mahattaka.*[93] Baladhikrita is different from *Senapati* and has been regarded as junior to the latter. [94] The records of the Maitrkas and the Chahamanas do at times equate baladhikrita with senapati, but it can generally be regarded as a lower appointment.[95]
Mahavyuhapati	:	Chief master of military arrays.[96] This is a strange appointment as it is the general who

deploys his army or the officers under command who do so on receipt of orders of the formation commander. Whether he was some sort of a chief-tactician or merely the one who passed orders done the ladder of command, is not understood.

Mahapilupati : Chief elephant[97] keeper. He was also called *mahapramattavara*.[98]

Mahasvasadhanika[99] : Chief commander of the cavalry. He is also called *brihadasvavara* in the *Harshacharita*.[100] *Mahasvapati*[101] was the other designation by which he was known.

Mahaganastha[102] : Commander of the *gana* (squardron). This unit of the army has nowhere been mentioned. It may then refer to the corporation of soldiers and their commander.

Katuka[103] : Commander of the elephant force. He is also known as *pilupati*[104] *Mahayuddhapati*.[105]

Mahayuddhapati[106] : Officer in charge of the armoury.

Paikkadhipati[107] : Commander of infantry.

Gaulmika[108] : Officer who commanded a troop of the soldiers or even a battalion.

Dvarapati/Dvaradhipai[109] : The commander of frontier-passes. He was the most important officer in the military hierarchy of Kashmir. He was vested with judicial powers over the commander of the forts.[110]

Rahasyadhikrita[111]	:	Incharge of secret services.
Kottapala[112]	:	Predecessor of the modern *Kotwal.* He was the officer incharge of the *Kotta* or fort. It was a very important assignment as the king, while proceeding on an expedition, left everything to his charge.[113]
Maryadhaurya[114]	:	He was the warden of the marches and operated from some fort. There could be a number of *maryadhauryas* in a country with different areas of responsibility. They worked under the supervision of zonal *dandanayakas*.
Dandanayaka or	:	Commanders in the army. They were quite
Mahadandanayakas[115]	:	a few in number, particularly in the Pratihara empire.[116]
Gaulmika[117]	:	A class of military officers *hastya-asvagomahishajavik adhyakasha.*[118] Inspectors of elephants, horses, cows, buffaloes, goats and sheep.
Pati[119]	:	Superintendents of soldiers barracks.
Cata-Bhata[120]	:	Irregular and regular soldiers.
		They also worked as policemen who kept law and order and apprehended criminals.
Yamaceti[121]	:	Woman watchers of the night.
Dirghadbvaga[122]	:	Express couriers who delivered messages very quickly.
Lekhaharaka[123]	:	A letter courier.

Servagatah[124]	:	Officers of secret services, who went everywhere.
Bhisaka[125]	:	Physician.
Naimittika[126]	:	Astrologer to forecast omens at the time of undertaking expeditions.
Kary-adhikara-Purusa[127]	:	Officers in charge of elephants.
Khola[128]	:	Spy or royal official.
Rauta[129]	:	Often found in the Chandella inscriptions. He was a military officer who could be a brahmana or kshatriya.
Mahasahaniya[130]	:	Great master of the stables.
Charana[131]	:	Reciter of the heroic deeds, a bard. He acted as a "herald in war and as pledge for the fulfillment of the contracts. If these were broken, the bard would commit *tragoa* (religious suicide) and bring the most terrible curses upon the head of the offender.
Dauhsadhyasadhanika[132]	:	He was an officer who looked after the catapults and other engines of assaulting well defended localities.
Khandapala *Khandaraksha*[133]	:	Millitary officer of an equivalent status of the kottapala.
Nagaradhipa	:	Although he was censor of morals and was responsible to maintain law and order under emergent circumstances he was assigned military duties like deference of the town or suppression of army revolt.

It may be noted that Kautilya's superintendents of armoury, ships, horses, elephants, chariots and infantry are merely administrative appointments. They had no functions of command over their respective charge in the field. The perusal of the long list of military ranks and appointments, omits the mentions of that category of junior officers which led their men in the van and in the thick of battle. As such, it is not possible, at present to get a clear idea of all the ranks intervening between the lowly *'chata bhata'* to the exalted *mahabaladhikrita* from the available records.

However, we are on surer ground when we study rank-structure of the Muslim armies of the period, as those were properly graded. The lowest ranked officer of ten was *khail-tash; qaid* commanded a '*khail'* which probably consisted of 100 horses, *sarhang* commanded 500 troopers, while the *hajib* had a *'jaish'* or an army under him. All troops in a province were under the *sipah-salar*. Besides, *arid* or *sahib-i-diwan-i-ard*, was the head of the military department. He was the chief advisor to the Sultan on military matters. He looked after the welfare of troops and ensured, that high standards of efficiency were being maintained at all times. He had his assistant in *naibarid* who arranged for the payment of quarterly salary to the troops and rendered his accounts to the *wazir* through the *dar-i-istifa*. *Arid* also served as the record officer of the

troops and kept a muster-roll showing deficiencies caused by death, illness and war-casualties. Further, he ensured that *the* Sultan was well provided for during his journeys. During wars, the *arid* acted as Quartermaster-General of the armed forces and supplied provisions at different camping sites along the lines of communication. After a victory, he arranged collection and distribution of booty in accordance with the Islamic law.[134]

Before closing the discussion on military ranks and appointments we would like to point out that warfare was no exclusive domain of the men folk. Our times not only provided some powerful women rulers but it also witnessed them donning the robes of Field Commanders. Sister of Deccan's Jayasimha II named Alkadevi besieged Gokage (modern Gokak in Belgaum district) in 1047 AD. Mahammad Ghori had to suffer a crushing defeat at the hands of Nayakadevi mother of Chalukya Bhima II, in 1178 AD. Umadevi attacked Belagavatti (Shimoga District, Karnataka) in 1197 AD.[135]

EMOLUMENTS OF SOLDIERS

Another important aspect which demands our consideration at this stage is the question of pay and allowances of the soldiers. The most potent factor that generally motivates a common man to suffer extreme privations of field service and rigours of army life is his salary. If he does

not get the amount that will buy him and his family the required number of loaves, he is not likely to join the army. No lure of adventure and martial glory may entice a man to the roll of arms. Accordingly, it was felt that the army becomes disaffected and mortified if it is not paid regularly.[136] The tradition of making regular payment to the troops had become well established by the Epic age. Rama is said to have enquired of Bharata: 'Dost thou not at the proper time grant, the soldiers what thou shouldst, namely, provision and pay'? He further adds a sagacious advice: 'Remember that if the proper time for these be passed, the servants become angry with their master and tax him; and great is the evil that springs thereform.[137] In the *Mahabharata* the regular payment to the army has been repeatedly insisted upon.[138]

We have come across the following rates of pay per annum for each category of officers and soldiers: [139]

Commander of the Army	:	48,000	*Panas* per annum, cf. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1929, pp. 783 (The salaries could be monthly and not annual)
Commander (*Prasasti*)	:	24,000	-do-
The Chief Constable (*Nayaka*)	:	12,000	-do-

The Chiefs of Military Corporations, of elephants, of horses, of Chariots and of elephants	:	8,000	-do-
The Superintendent of Infantry, of cavalry, of chariots and or elephants.	:	4,000	-do-
Army physician, chariot driver and horse driver	:	2,000	-do-
The astrologer, the storytellers, the bard and trumpet blower.	:	1,000	-do-
Trained soldier,	:	500	-do-
Bodyguard	:	60	-do-
Elephant driver,	:	500-1,000	-do-
Messengers of middle quality.	:	10	*panas* for each *Yojana* he travels, and twice as much when he travels from 10 to 100 *yojanas*
Spies	:	1,000	*panas*
Fiery spies	:	5,000	*panas*
Servants leading the spies	:	250	*panas* or proportionate to the work done

The pay scales were attractive enough to keep officers and men

contented and beyond pecuniary temptations. Besides, they were provided with enough to command sizeable following.

Although the, tradition of making cash payments to soldiers was widely prevalent it was not the only mode of making payments. There was a category of villages which were exempted from payment of taxes, because they supplied soldiers *(ayudhiya)*[140] Nevertheless this was against the established principles whereby it was enjoined that if the king is "desirous of regulating the affairs of all villages equally, then he shall give no village to any (of his servants)."[141]

Harhsa adopted the practice of making cash payments to soldiers, but this was not so for the civil servants.[142] The ministers and officials were allotted land and cities for their maintenance.[143] The prince Balhara, according to the traveller Sulaiman, made cash payments to his troops, as was the practice among the Arabs. Someshvara appointed officers and also personally ensured that regular cash payments were made to his troops. In his army some soldiers were appointed on daily wages, others on monthly basis and still others were paid on every three, four, six or even 12 monthly basis.[144] The Chaha-mana officers were paid either in cash or in land grants. The hereditary soldiers seem to have been assigned lands in lieu of money, but the irregulars were always paid in cash,[145] Although the custom of land-grants in reward for meritorious services

was widely prevalent, the grant of land to high military officers was also known.[146] "In Mewar... fifteen thousand horses, bound by the ties of fidelity and service, followed their prince into the field, all supported by lands held by grant..." Besides, two or three horsemen could be engaged on an annual rent of rupees one thousand.[147] Whereas in Europe the feudatories undertook only forty days service in a year, in Rajasthan the services were to be rendered, as and when, demanded. Not only that, the feudal levies resided at the state capital for several months at a time or until relieved.[148]

During the reign of the Delhi Sultans in the Thirteenth century AD, except, volunteer militia, the troops were paid either in cash *(mawajib)* or in assignments *(iqta)*. The Officers, including the petty chiefs, drew their sustenance from revenues collected from the peasants. The soldiers, like those settled by Balban at Gopalgir, Kampil, Patiali, Bhojpur and Jalali, cultivated land and earned their living out of it. These Afghan settlers were born on the list of the hereditary soldiers of the State.[149]

Alauddin Khalji fixed the pay for the cavalier and his horse, depending upon his class as under :

First class : 234 t*ankas* annually

Second class : 156 *tankas* annually

Third class : 88 t*ankas* annually

He instituted regular pay for all ranks. But soon after his death, the old system of land-grants and revenue assignments came in vogue.[150]

MARCHING ALLOWANCES

In addition to pay, the soldiers were entitled to certain marching allowances while on active service. The *Rajatarangini* provides us with numerous examples. *Tantrin* troops of king Harhsa of Kashmir (1089-1101AD) when despatched to oppose the enemy, demanded marching allowances inspite of the fact that they did not go out of the town.[151] When Sussala (1112-1120 AD) was besieged in Shrinagar and was in critical condition, "they (soldiers) took from the king heavy marching allowances, just as if they had gone far off to another continent but nowhere did they fight."[152]

WELFARE OF FAMILIES: WAR CASUALITIES

It was duty of the sovereign to look after the welfare of families of those who had laid down their lives at the altar of the state. Narad enquires from Yudhisthira in the *Sabhaparva* "if he supports the wives and children of men who lay down their lives for him, or undergo misery on his account?[153] It was thus enjoined "the sons and wives of those who die while on duty shall get subsistence and wages. Infants, aged persons or deceased persons related to the deceased servants, shall also be .shown favour."[154] That this healthy tradition was in vogue during our period is

proved by the Garda plates of Trailokyavarman Chandella (1205-1206 AD). It is stated in the plates that land-grants were specifically made for the maintenance of the deceased's dependents.[155] This evidence is further corroborated by the records of Hammiravar-man's grant made to one of his brave Rautas.[156]

An undated *'viragal* of the 9th century AD in the Durga temple of Hosaholalu records the provisioning of relief to the next-of-kin of the dead soldiers.[157]

The maintenance of large standing armies cost the state's major chunk of their revenues. It has been reckoned that more than 50% of state's budget was spent towards the maintenance of their forces. The burden was not felt by the people because defence and protection were the two most important functions of the state and the people expected nothing beyond that. In cases of emergencies, loans were raised by the government.[158] Besides direct taxes, Kautilya suggests a long list of contrivances to replenish treasury through dubious means.[159]

Alberuni felt that the Indian kings legalised whoredom for the purpose of making money spent on the army. "The kings make them an attraction for their cities, or bait of pleasure for their subjects, for no other but financial reasons. [160] By the revenues which they derive from the business both as fines and taxes, they want to recover the expenses which

their treasury has to spend on the army."[161] Alberuni, however, finds nothing wrong with this practice. [162] He cites an example of Buyide prince Adub-Aldaula who allowed prostitution not only to fill state coffers but also to safeguard his people against the passions of his bachelor soldiers.[163]

THE FORTS AND FORTIFICATIONS

In spite of the administrative work in peace and administrative work in war time, there was a routine administrative work of construction and maintenance of strategically important forts and fortifications. The need to provide himself protection against man, beasts and nature led the man to construct forts and build fortifications. "Then, for the sake of combination and resistance they made towns at first and they resorted to fortress in inaccessible deserts and wastes, in mountains and caves; also they industriously constructed with their own fingers an artificial fort on trees, mountains and in water."[164] To begin with men fortified themselves with the help of thorn hedge, later this was supplemented by the earthen bund and palisades of tree trunks. Thereafter, they raised masonary walls one parallel to the other and the gap between the two was filled with earth. "The face of the outer wall was raised by a few feet and crenellated to give protection against arrows and other projectiles. Later on, towers at intervals were built into the wall."[165] We have it on the authority of Sir

Mortimer Wheeler that the fortification in India originated long before the historic age. Excavations at Harappa, Mohanjodaro and at other sites of Harappan culture like Ali Murad in Sindh and Kalibangan situated on the left bank of Ghaggar in northern Rajasthan prove without doubt the existence of fortifications. "Words are superfluous; the evidence of archaeology brooks no refutation. We now know that both earth work fortifications and masonary walls defended the Indian towns, long before the rise of epics, and indeed continued to do so right into the modern period."[166]

During the Vedic-age forts were termed as *'durg, 'pur'* and '*dehli*.' Muir is convinced that during the Vedic period the "forts consisting, apparently of a series of concentric walls" actually existed in the country.[167] One can conveniently glean this from the innumerable references in the *Rigveda* to the effect that the original inhabitants of India called *dasas* or *dasyus* were excellent builders of forts. Forced by political exigencies and the struggle for existence, the Aryans improved upon the forts captured from their adversaries. They also constructed quite a number of their own. We have no definite information as to the details of Aryan forts but they are known to have been constructed of stone or sun-dried bricks, occasionally those were built of "hardened earth with palisades and a ditch."[168] In the *Ramayana* we find art of fortification highly developed.[169] By the time of the *Mahabharata,*

regular classification of forts had been evolved such as desert fort *(dhanva durga)*, earth fort (*mahi durga)* hill fort (*giri durga*), human fort (*manusya durga*), artificial fort (mrd durga.) and forest fort *(van durga)*[170]

Bhisma's advice to Yudhistra on the subject was that a king should keep "his eyes on the six different kinds of citadels…. Those are water citadels, earth-citadels, hill-citadels, mud-citadels, human-citadels and forest citadels …the citadel should contain an abundant stock of rice and weapons, should be protected with impenetrable walls and trench, should be teemed with elephants and steeds and cows, should be inhabited by men versed in mechanical arts, and provisions of every kind should be well stored."[171]

We have it on the authority of the classical chroniclers that at the time of Alexander's invasion India was dotted with innumerable fortifications of varying solidity. No towns were left at the mercy of marauders.[172] During Mauryan period; the forts came to form the bastions of strength of a state and an element of its sovereignty.[173]

It was from behind the strong walls of an impregnable citadel that one could exercise control over one's allies, maintain one's army, wring destruction on wild tribes, and secure one's treasury. With the fort as a firm base, it was easy to carry on intrigue and secret war against adversaries.[174] When the parties happened to be equally balanced, he who could defeat a fortified enemy and capture a fort, was regarded superior

and his dominions were well protected.[175] When strategically isolated, bereft of allies and unable to oppose a superior enemy, a king was advised to seek shelter in a fort. The fort chosen should be such that its supplies of food-stuffs, fodder, firewood and water, cannot be easily interferred with by the enemy.[176] No wonder it was enjoined: "On all the four quarters of the boundaries of the kingdom, defensive fortifications against an enemy in war shall be constructed on grounds naturally best fitted for the purpose.'[177]

CLASSIFICATION OF FORTS

The forts were classified in the following categories:[178]

a. Water fort (audaka): Water-fort was to be constructed on a site which could either be an island in the middle of a river or a flat piece of land surrounded by low lying land.

b. *Mountain fort (parvata) :* It was built on high rocks or the caves in the high mountains were converted into fortifications.

c. *Desert fort (dhanvana) :* This type of fort, as its very name suggests, could be raised on a tract devoid of water and having thickest growth, peculiar to the desert.

d. Forest-fort (vandurga): Vandurga was to be built naturally on a piece of land in the middle of the forest and surrounded by water, thorny bushes wagtails etc. It may be noted that water and

mountain forts were recommended as best suited for the protection of towns and cities or to be more specific 'populous centres.' Deserts and forest fortifications were recommended for safeguarding the security of habitations in the wilderness or of the inhospitable deserts and dreaded jungles.[179]

SITE

The forts were to be sited keeping in view the strategical and tactical requirements. A fort should be easily defendable and was to be sited for all-round defence. All possible enemy approaches were to be dominated and direct escalades prevented. This could be achieved by having natural or artificial obstacles around the fortifications. The surrounding areas should be cultivable from where supplies could be procured in hours of an emergency The place must have a reliable and perennial source of water supply, which could not be interferred with from without. "The king may have his fortified capital (*samudayasthanam*) in the centre of his kingdom, in a locality naturally best fitted for the purpose, such as the bank of the confluence of rivers a deep pool of perennial water, or of a lake or tank, a fort, circular, rectangular, or square in form, surrounded with an artificial canal of water and connected with both land and water paths."[180]

MOATS

Around the fort three moats 6 feet apart from one another were required to be dug out their width being 84, 72 and 60 feet respectively. The depth of these moats was required to be either 21, 18, 15 or 42, 36, 30 feet respectively. The sides of these moats were required to be steep and built of stones or bricks. Dangerous and fearful reptiles like the crocodile were to be left in these ditches.[181] A rampart 72 feet wide and 36 feet high was to be constructed of mud, made firm by the trampling of elephants at a distance of 24 feet from the innermost moat. The surrounding wall *(prakara)* was to be square at the bottom and oval in the middle. Parapets at a distance of about 18 or 36 feet depending upon the area of the fort from each other, made of bricks were to be raised. Within the fort were to be constructed square towers having movable ladders at a distance of 180 feet from each other. In between the intervening gaps of the two adjacent towers a broad street was to be formed. Between the tower and the broad street there was to be an *indrakosha*, by covering pieces of perforated wooden planks. This was meant to seat three archers.[182] To ascend parapets, paths, six feet in breadth were to be constructed. For flight and exit in times of emergency, doors were to be fixed and passages made in the strongest portions of the rampart. To strengthen defences and to prevent enemy movement outside the rampart,

minor defensive contrivances such as knee breakers, pits, wreathe of thorns, palm-leaf and so on were planted. An entrance gate as broad as one sixth of the street was to be fixed into the rampart made to bulge out 9 feet approximately. Above the gate a turret resembling an alligator was to be constructed. Channels were to be built to hold weapons like stones, spades, axes, cudgels, clubs, hammers, discus, sa*taghani and* war-machines, spears, tridents, bamboo-sticks with pointed edges made of iron, etc.[183]

A fort was to have 12 gates, provided with land and water-way besides secret passages and numerous roads e.g., chariot roads, royal roads, roads leading to pasture grounds, country parts, military posts, crematorium, gardens, groves, elephant-forests and so on. The fort was to provide a habitat for peoples of all castes and vocational professions, each occupying a place according to a well laid-out plan formulated after taking into consideration factors such as occupational requirements, tactical demands and political exigencies, in these scheme guardian deities of all corners were also not ignored.[184]

The forts were required to be well stocked at all times with necessities of life in war e.g., grains, oils, salt, medicines, vegetables both dry and fresh, dried meat, haystock, firewood, metals, skins, charcoal, timber, garments of fibre, weapons and armour of sorts including stones,

poisons and so on. Old articles were to be replaced in sufficient numbers to last for a long time.[185]

To prevent treachery, enemy intrigues and instigations, different arms of the army were to be officered by numerous commanders at all echelons including the artisans employed for the repair of the fort and the hostile elements of population. The *bahirikas,* were not allowed to dwell within the forts.[186]

Comparing the relative defensive value of the different types of forts,[187] the mountain fort was regarded best, followed by water-fort and fort on the plain. Bas-reliefs on Buddhist monuments like Sanchi gateways, Urvilva and Rajagriha, amply support the details of fortifications as provided by Kautilya and the Greek visitor Megasthanese[188] Archaeological excavations at Eran[189] (District Sagaur in M.P.), Kosam[190] (District Allahabad U.P.) and several other sites, confirm the above view. Same is the evidence furnished by the excavations at Nagarjunkonda (A.P.), which has brought to light the remnants of Vijaypuri, the glamorous capital of the Ikshavakus in the third century AD.[191]

The *Shukranitisara,* mentions *parikha* a fort surrounded by ditches all around; *parigha* was a fort defended by walls made of mud, bricks and stones; *sainya durga* or troop-fort was defended by soldiers whose formations were cited for all-round defence. *Sahaya durga*—help-fort

was the one belonging to helpful and friendly kinsfolk.[192] The later works stuck to the nomenclature contained in the *Arthashastra*. Further, the defended sectors and localities where the troops deployed temporarily, were also termed as different type of forts, e.g., *daivata*[193]—a place in which hill formations looking like ramparts of man-built forts were provided by the nature herself; *kurma durga*[194] (tortoise-fort)—it was hurriedly raised to ambush the enemy forces; *yudha durga*[195] differed from the traditional fort only in as much as that it provided means of intercommunication built into the walls. According to Yajnavalkya, forts, were meant to safeguard the people, their king and his treasury.[196]

Many felt that a single archer fighting from the ramparts of a fort could successfully keep at bay the onslaught of 100 enemy troops.[197] This is brilliantly exemplified in the siege of Banasala where *Bhikshu* had been besieged by the troops of Jayasinaha (1128-49 AD). Towards the last stage of the siege, when general assault had been launched "Gargika, a follower of *Bhikshu*, held back singly, by shower of arrows, the assailants who were entering through various buildings, low and high."[198] The towns of the time of Yuan Chwang, small or big were protected by, walls built mostly of bricks and tiles.[199] During our period the hill forts rose to great eminence "the typical site preferred for a hill fortress was precipitous cliff sloping to a river on one, two or even three sides and with steep slopes falling away on the other side. At the highest point was built a fort

serving as a citadel. Some of these were like eagle-nests on lofty cliffs, places of last refuge rather than strategical positions. But others were of real strategic strength commanding the countryside or the approaches to a state."[200]

We may well recall that Mahmud Ghazni could not capture Kashmir due to the impregnability of its fortresses. Alberuni, writing about the forts of Rajagiri and Lahur, rated them as the two strongest places, he had ever seen.[201] Shahis of Afghanistan and the Punjab were lucky in having their towns located strategically. The entire region of Kapisa, surrounded by mountain ranges was inaccessible. That was the reason why the Arabs could not take it inspite of the fact that on numerous occasions they came very close to its borders. Udhbhandapura was protected by the Indus, the Kabul River and the mountains in its north.[202]

The Chandelas were very particular about building and maintaining forts. Viravarman's Ajaigarh stone inscription sings praises of Trailokyavarman as a builder of forts and terms him as "a very creator in providing strong places."[203] The Gurjara Pratiharas too did not neglect this aspect of national security. The Jalor fort is believed to have been built by Nagabhata I. The sons of Harichandra are reported to have constructed a mighty rampart around Mandor.[204] They very well

garrisoned Gwalior, Kanauj and Kalanjar. Besides, they had number of well fortified places.[205]

The Chachchnama relates that Dahir in his Kingdom had a number of fortified towns like Nirun; Debal, Lohana, Hakha, Askelanda; Sikka, Multan; Shakalha, Budapur, Siwistan, Brahmanabad, Rewar; and Alor besides others.[206] A During 1000-1200 AD a lot of emphasis was placed on the forts. A large number of forts find a place of pride in the annals of the period. The important amongst them were Ajmer, Delhi, Nadol, Nagor, Samana, Hansi, Tabarhindah, Sirsa, Jaisalmer, Mandalgarh, Kohram, Chittor and Jangala kupa.[207] A number of other forts have also been mentioned: Barigarh (in modern Charkhari), Ajaigarh 32 km. in the South-West of Kalanjara, Maudha (District Hamirpur), Maniagarh (District Chhatarpur), Marha (District Banda) and Madhar (North of Jabalpur). "It was from behind the walls of these strong forts that the Rajputs continued their resistance against the Muslims even after sustaining some heavy defeats in the open battle."[208]

During the troubled days of the later Karkota kings of Kashmir, many of the Damara lords built fortresses of their own and successfully defied the writs of their overlords.[209] In the 11th century AD much reliance came to be placed on the forts for the purposes of defence. When Mahmud of Ghazni attacked Kanauj in 1018 AD, it had as many as seven

forts, detached from each other, to defend its ramparts.[210] It may, however, be. noted that the tactical considerations for sitting of forts continued to remain unchanged and the principles of fortification almost the same as those originally preached by Kautilya. We still had the forest and the water-forts being mentioned in the contemporary accounts of our period. Al'utbi describes the forest fort of Asi (or Asni), which was invaded by Mahmud in 1018 AD: "around this fort there was an impenetrable and dense jungle, full of snakes which no enchanters could tame, and so dark that even the rays of the full moon could not be discerned in it. There were broad and deep ditches all around."[211] About the hill forts situated on steep and high hills we have the following account concerning the fort of Bhatia "the walls of which the wings of the eagle could not surmount, and which was surrounded as by the ocean with a ditch of exceeding depth and breadth."[212] At the time of Mahmud's invasion of Somnath, Raja Bhim of Anhilwara had fled to the safety of the fort of Kandama, which "was surrounded by much water and there appeared no way of approaching it."[213] As another example of the water fort, we have it in the one built by Jayapida, known as *Abhyantara Kotta* or the Inner castle (modern Andarkot) which stood on a plateau surrounded by water on all sides.[214] It was in this very fort that Shahmir, the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir, obtained surrender from Kota Rani.[215]

FRONTIER WATCH-STATIONS

No discussion of the Indian forts and fortifications will be complete without a brief mention of the frontier 'Watch stations' in the state of Kashmir. These were termed variously as *dvara*, gate or *dranga* or *dhakka.* They served as defensive outposts for the purpose of keeping a careful guard over the passes—the only routes of egress from and ingress into the heavenly valley. These 'posts' were garrisoned by regular troops under command officers known as *drangesa* or *drangadhipa* under the overall supervision of a high state official the *dwarapati* or "lord of the gate."

A number of *drangas* or gates have been mentioned in the *Rajatarangini.* It was at the *dranga* of Surapura, while negotiating whom, Utpala, the assassin of king Sussala (1121-1128 AD) was caught and dispatched to the other world by the commandant of the post. His head was presented to Jayasimha, (1128-49 AD) at Avantipura.[216] Another watch station,[217] lay on the route leading into *Kisanganga*-valley,[218] and the one at Varahamula[219] (Modern Baramula). When Lothana, a claimant to the throne of Kashmir during the reign of Jayasimha (1128-49 AD), sacked the possessions of Mallarjuna and "carried of his horses, plundered the market of Attalika and destroyed everywhere, the watch stations on the roads *(margadranga)* and other fortified places."[220]

Besides serving as defensive posts, these drangas were used for customs and police administration.[221] M.A. Stein opines that the security of the valley and safety of its people from the turbulent hill-tribes *dards,* in the North and the *khasas* in the south and west, depended entirely on these watch-stations. Sitting in these, the week Kashmiri soldiers could easily frustrate the designs of valorous and hardy mountain classes.[222]

At this stage we may admit that the details of fort construction in our period have not come down to us from any source beyond "vague generalizations and hyperboles" of the Muslim authors. The main cause of difficulty is the fact that most of the forts of our period have vanished from the face of the earth. And those that remain have been altered or modified to such an extent in the later period that it is well nigh impossible to formulate any definite conclusions. However, "they were usually constructed by running massive stone walls round the summit of top contours of the hills. The walls built of large block of stones, laid without cement, usually rose from the very edge of the hill, being a continuation of the scrap of the rock. Occasionally, walls of masonry appear to have been erected to guard "against access at places where the difficulties of the ascent in its natural state might possibly be overcome. The walls were further strengthened by bastions or towers constructed at irregular intervals."[223] According to Stein, the time-honoured fashion of

fort construction in Kashmir was that the walls were raised of rough unhewn stones arranged in a wooden frame, which could easily decay and perish if not given due attention. The pitiable condition of the Sikh fortifications is a case in point. Rose as late as the 19th century AD they became dilapidated towards the end of the same century.[224] P.C. Chakravarty is, therefore, right when he says that the general character of defences made round the cities remained by far unchanged since the times of Kautilya. Nevertheless, the apparent increase in width and height of walls and towers as well as the depth and width of moats was the result of evolutionary process.[225] This was due to the fact that no major changes had taken place in the art of war necessitating corresponding changes in the plan and construction of the fortifications.

As far as provisioning of the fort was concerned, the supplies continued to be procured from the outlying villages, as long as the situation of war permitted.[226] Thereafter, the besieged had to fall upon whatever was stored within the fort. For the storage of water, large tanks were built within the fort. Where it was not possible to do so as in Kashmir, snow was stored in the pits, which could be melted and used when required.[227] Where the forts were constructed on the banks of rivers the water could be drawn from them.[228]

ADMINISTRATION IN WAR

(SUPPLIES, MEANS OF TRANSPORT, MEDICAL COVER AND WOMEN IN THE CAMP)

SUPPLIES

It is an old saying that an army marches on its belly. Supplies and administration thereof, is essential to keep alive the fighting machine. It is an affair which calls for foresight and planning of provisions, keeping in view all the operational plans of the commander, the country, local availability of supplies, and economy in use to facilitate carriage, sustenance of long drawn operations, simplicity of arrangements and rapport between the supplier and the supplied.

The Mauryas had a sound system of military supplies. A board of five members was responsible for transport and commissariat. This department worked in co-operation with the officer incharge of bullock trains, "Which were used for transporting engines of war, food for soldiers, provender for the cattle, and other military requisites. To the sound of the gong they send out foragers to bring in grass, and by a system of rewards and punishments, ensure the work being done with dispatch and promptness."[229] We can trace the establishment of this department to the days of the *Mahabharata,* wherein the Pandava camp consisted of experienced artisans, and had an adequate supply of weapons

of sorts, food, water, fodder, chaff, honey, clarified butter and pounded lac Duryodhana's camp had materials for "the repair of chariots, tiger-skins to cover the chariots, spare spear-blades and sticks, spare quivers ... oil, mollasses .... Syringes, water . . . oil-cloth...."[230] The establishment of commissariat stores was recommended along the routes of the army's advance for which detailed plans were drawn out before the commencement of the march. The halts were to be regulated keeping in view the ability of various villages to supply the carrying of foodstuffs double the quantity required for actual consumption, the half being reserve for meeting unforeseen eventualities.[231]

This practice of gathering military supplies at selected places along the line of communication was continued by Harsha. Emissaries of elephant forest-rangers used to report to the commissariat stores at villages, towns and marts,[232] for obtaining their rations in anticipation of elephants moving into their zones.

Describing camp on the march Bana mentions another system whereby supplies were collected from villages enroute, may be by the military contractors. They at times found it difficult to obtain their requirements from uncooperative villages—"these poor (old) unattended nobles overwhelmed with the toil and worry of conveying their provisions upon fainting oxen provided by wretched village householders

and obtained with difficulty, themselves grasped their appurtenances" and swore to throw off their servitude of the camp which was pinnacle of all the misery,[233] We find a graphic account of the military suppliers unloading their ware, nay their full fledged shops at a halting station,[234] in the *sishupalavadha*. Hemachandra of 12th century AD in his celebrated work *Dvaiashraya* says, "where the army of Mularaja halted, traders plied their callings as in their shops in the city….[235] This confirms our belief that the troops depended for their supplies upon the petty contractors and shop-keepers who accompanied the military caravans. However, this system of procuring supplies locally was not free from defects. Instances are not lacking when ripe crops were cut and villagers forcibly made to part with their grain.[236] Accordingly, at times, the supplies were collected in advance and carried along with the army or sent from behind.[237]

According to the *Prabandhachintamani*, once while the Chahamana army was on the march, the officer-in-charge kitchen pleaded with Prithviraja III to allot him more she-camels as the 700 camels allotted to him were not enough to carry the kitchen service.[238] It speaks for well organised commissariat and transport service. But what was true of Harsha's days about the exploitation of people along the route of army's advance, the same can be said about the armies of Gurjara-

Pratiharas. "The *Sadhanikas* (officials incharge of horses) took away straw from the barns. Soldiers had to be kept off from food crops, fields of sugarcane and the produce of kitchen-gardens. Villagers tried to conceal all they could. Even dung-cakes were carried to the backyard, vegetables were transferred to the house from the adjoining pleasure-grove, and money was put in bronze vessels and carried to the house of *baladhikrta* as a *nyasa* with his ladies."[239]

For the purpose of transporting supplies, elephants,[240] camels,[241] oxen, mules,[242] donkeys,[243] etc. were widely used. When the animal transport was not available, "the army itself should be entrusted with the business of carrying them."[244] The difficulty of arranging supplies could be partly overcome by arranging storage in a central place.[245] Even the free labourers were employed for the purpose of making "Camps, roads, bridges, walls and rivers and for carrying the machines, weapons, arms, instruments and provisions...."[246] This system later developed into corvee- the obligation of performing gratuitous labour for the sovereign. In the Kashmir valley, all able-bodied youth who did not otherwise join the army as combatants were called upon. to carry rations, fodder and other war material.[247]Although the imperial Karkottak seem to have paid for the services rendered by these labourers,[248] the latter rulers took recourse to *begar* or forced labour.[249] We also gather, from

Harshacharita that the practice of making payments to labourers was in use.[250]

Sultan Mahmud had a department of supplies placed under the Arid. On an expedition, every soldier was required to arrange his own supplies and was paid his salary in advance for this purpose. But the Arid did cater for reserve rations in case of prolonged expeditions.[251] Once in the enemy's country, the Turks lived off the land. In 1021 AD, Mahmud's army while on the way to Lahore, "instead of besieging Lahore, dispersed throughout the neighbouring country in order to subsist upon it ... "[252] They also laid waste the enemy territory and looted whatever was of use[253] to them. At a times they (the Turks) relied upon their allies to fill their sacks with necessities of life. When Mahmud decided to advance against Thaneshvar, Anand-pala agreed to provide him the passage as well as the supplies."[254]

The Muslims at times received essential supplies from the home country i.e., vinegar which "was transported in a concentrated form. Cotton was saturated in it and dried and the operation was repeated until the cotton would hold no more; the essence could then be extracted by the simple process of soaking the cotton in water."[255]

The Indian princes too some times (very rare although) are known to have embarked upon career of conquest without adequate supplies and

lived off the land. Kandarpa, vexed by Harsha's (1089-1101 AD) reproaches set out to conquer Rajauri although "he had no supplies."[256]

No discussion of administration in war will be complete unless a special mention is made of the camel as a versatile means of transport at this juncture. Shukra regarded this animal as the best means of conveyance next only to the elephant.[257] The camels were highly valued by Harsha. Bana, describing the camp of Harsha noted "troops of camels sent or being sent as presents or brought back in return for others ... decked with strings of ever jingling golden ornaments; having long tufts of hair and variegated threads of wool of five colours hanging near their ears; all tawny red as monkey's cheeks."[258] In Rajasthan the sandy nature of the country suited them well and they became the most sought for means of transport.[259] In Prithviraja III's war against Nagarjuna of Gudapura, his colours were carried on camels.[260] They also became the foremost animals of Sindh, both in utility as well as numbers. In the mediaeval period camels carried whole of the merchandise from the sea to Kandahar. They carried weight equal to 12 stones, travelled by night and rested by day in stages of 16 to 20 miles. The animal fed heartily where most other animals would starve to death. [261] Without camel the desert cannot be conceived as a habitable place. Talking about the Arabian camel, Philip K. Hitti says, "The Camel is the nomad's nourisher,

his vehicle of transportation and his medium of exchange. The dowry of the bride, the price of blood, the profit of *maysir* (gambling), the wealth of a Sheikh, are all computed in terms of camel. It is Bedouin's constant companion, his *alter ego,* his foster-parent. He drinks his milk instead of water (which he spares for the cattle); he feasts on his flesh; he covers himself with his skin; he makes his tent of its hair; its dung he uses as fuel, and its urine as a hair tonic. To him the camel is more than "the ship of the desert," it is the special gift of Allah. The Bedouin... takes delight in referring to themselves as *ahlal-biar*-the people of the camel. Musil states that there is hardly a member of the Ruwalah tribe who has not on some occasion drunk water from a camel's paunch. In time of emergency either an old camel is killed or a stick is thrust down its throat to make it vomit water. If the camel has been watered within a day or two, the liquid is tolerably drinkable.…The Arabian camel can go for about twenty five days in winter and about five days in summer without water...."[262] It may be of interest to note that during our period, camels were not used for the purpose of fighting from their back. This innovation can be credited to the Persians in the 18th century AD.[263]

Medical Cover

Elaborate system of evacuation of casualties, as it exists today was not in vogue during our period or even later. Nevertheless, the sick were

tended and the war-wounded shown due attention. The physicians were kept in the rear for looking after the war casualties.[264] It was enjoined that at the time of the commencement of action, "Physicians with surgical instruments, machines, remedial oils, and cloth in their hands. . . should stand behind, uttering encouraging words to fighting men."[265]

The responsibility of carrying wounded along the army was that of the free labourers.[266] The *Rajatarangini* mentions of the field-ambulance which was responsible for removing the dead and the wounded to a place of safety and disposing of the dead and treating the wounded. When Sussala (1112-20 AD) was besieged in Srinagar, "even he was seen arranging that the wounded should have their hurts bandaged, the arrow-heads removed and proper presents given the sums which the king spent on the troops by.... gratuities and medicines, were beyond calculation."[267] Stretchers or litters were at times improvised with spears broken or otherwise for the evacuation or the removal of the wounded and the dead. According to one version of the rout of Muhammad Ghori at the hands of Prithviraja III, the Sultan was brought to the harbour in a litter improvised with broken spears.[268]

Women in the Camp

Women of high rank and courtesans formed part of the war-camp right from the early period. The king along with the harem was advised to

position himself in the centre of the army while it was on march or was in the camp.[269] The same concept was approved of by Kamandaka.[270] Harsha's glamorous camp had in its train "high-born noble's wives" who were "thronged with roguish emissaries sent by princes of rank."[271] Women in Dahir's camp had fallen into the hands of Arabs.[272] Queens and concubines and maid-servants in the camp have also been described by Magha. "The prostitutes pitched their tents, spread their beds, made themselves more attractive by putting on new robes, and like old residents with offerings of water and betel-leaf began to receive strangers."[273] Describing the Rajput army on the march, Dashrath Sharma says that the "villagers in general felt entertained by the sight of courtesans on elephants . . . "[274] No wonder that the Indian armies too heavy and too slow to move, looked gorgeous with fluttering-banners, clinking-bangles and melodious music to the accompaniment of blinding clouds of dust.

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CHAPTER–IV
ARMS AND ARMOUR

Like many other things of life, arms and weapons underwent a gradual process of evolution, for instance, the sword which was not known to the people of Mohenjodaro and Harrapa and it would seem, rarely used by Vedic Aryans, and became one of the principal weapons of India in the post Vedic age. The bow, which was a wooden staff bent into a highly finished composite apparatus in later centuries. Moreover, with the advance of knowledge in science and metallurgy, powerful projectile machines worked by mechanical power appear to have been discovered and used in both offensive and defensive warfare.

The history of warfare is intimately linked with the development of weaponry and implements of war. The characteristics of arms, beside other things, determine tactics of war. It is the range and the rate of fire power of rival forces, which indicates the stage up to which close contact can be postponed, encirclement completed, the flank-at tacks pressed-home and the forward move ordered.[1]

CLASSIFICATION

Various classifications of weapons based on their characteristics, their mode of operation and functions have come down to us from ancient and modern writers. Kautilya, in his *Arthashastra* (Bk II, Ch.18) divides

arms as engines of war, weapons with pointed ends like ploughshares, bows, swords, razor-bladed weapons, stone and armours.[2]

The *Agnipurana*[3] again classifies weapons under five heads viz., *Yantra-mukta:* Thrown by machines.

(a) *Pani-mukta:* Thrown by hand.

(b) *Muktasandharita:* Those thrown and drawn back.

(c) *Amukta:* Which are not thrown.

(d) *Bahuayudha:* Natural weapons-limbs of the body.

The *Nitiprakasika*[4] divided them as under:

(a) *Mukta:* That can be thrown.

(b) *Amukta:* That which is not thrown.

(c) *Muktamukha:* That which can be wielded in both ways i.e., may or may not be thrown.

(d) *Mantramukta;* Those which can be thrown by means of spells. These four classes of arms, the authors adds, constituted the four feet of the *Dhanurveda.*

A later work of our period, *Yuktikalpataru* of Bhoja, gives the following classification of weapons:

(a) *Mayikam:* Deceitful e.g., combustibles.

(b) *Nirmayam:* Non-deceitful like the sword.

P.C. Chakravarty has divided weapons into two broad categories i.e., offensive and *defensive.*[5] In a recent work of repute by G.N. Pant, the weapons have been functionally divided as slashing weapons, (swords, axes, etc.) weapons of thrust (spears, tridents, etc.) projectiles (arrows, etc.) and weapons for smashing (mace, etc.) [6]

Taking into consideration their utility and role in actual battle and the terms in which they would be better understood in the modern age, the weapons belonging to the period of our study can more appropriately be divided as under:

(a) *Close-Combat Weapons:* Used at close-range and for "hand-to-hand fights like sword, mace, dagger, trident, etc.

(b) *Light Close-Support Weapons:* Bows, arrows, *naptha* balls, slings and so on which could be carried easily.

(c) *Heavy Close-Support Weapons: Sarvatobhadra,* catapults, battering-rams, *visvasaghati, etc.*, which were heavy machines and required a number of men to carry or to operate them and which were used to defend or attack forts and fortifications.

(d) Shields

(e) Armour

Keeping pedanticism aside in its narrow grooves, we shall proceed to study the characteristics of weapons most in use with a view to assessing their battle worthiness. It may be noted that we shall be studying weapons and their characteristics and not the history of their origin or the stages of their development dating back to the dim past.

BOW AND ARROW

In the Vedic literature one finds frequent allusion to bow and arrow. The art of using this weapon had become so important that a separate treatise called *Dhanurveda* had been devoted to the learning and mastery of this *art dhanu* meant bow;[7] *isu,*[8] *sarva, sari and bana* signified the arrow. The bow was held in such high esteem that its removal from the hand of the dead person completed the last rites.[9]

The mastery 'over bow and arrow was considered to be so important that it was felt that, "A single *dhanurdhari* can maintain law and order in a village, as a single lion rules the entire forest. The epic warriors could perform[10] wonderful feats of valour and destruction with the help of bow and arrow. "Almost every battle scene presents a net-work of arrows crossing and cutting one another in mid-air. Bows are rent asunder and bow strings are cut in twin; charioteers are slain, and chariots are destroyed together with *their* horses.[11] We have a Jataka story which given due allowance for exaggeration, succinctly brings out the high

standards of expertise achieved by the archers of ancient India.

Rajyavardhana when returning to Thaneshwar after receiving the news of his father's death, had "long white bandages, bound about arrow wounds received in battle while conquering the Hunas ….”[12] In anguish and burning rage on being informed about the death of Rajyavardhana, thus spoke Harsa, "truly now the fool... laid hands upon my lord's life as honey, saw not the coming onset of swarms of arrows. [13]" The Alina copper-plate of Maitraka king Siladitya of the 7th century AD eulogized that his bow and arrow had upset the peace of his enemy land. [14]

Kalhana mentions darts and arrows being used. Towards the close of Harsa's (of Kashmir) career (1089-1101 AD) in the fight at the city-bridge "Janakacandra and others shot arrows at the kings' fighting elephants which stood in front of the bridge and had thrown off its armour.. [15] Female archers are found depicted in the art of our period.

There are numerous references to bow and arrow in the *Sisupdiavadha*[16] Bow and arrow was the principal, weapon of the Gurjar-Pratihars as well as that of the Palas of Bengal. A terracota plaque from Paharpur (Bengal) shows that the bow and arrow were in use.[17] Describing the battle-field of Tarain after the defeat of Prithviraja III, Rawlinson says that amongst other things, in miles of area, heaped bows were found.[18] According to Chand Bardai Prithviraja was himself an

expert archer who could hit a target on hearing the sound without even seeing it.

Although archaeological finds of arrow-heads pertaining to post-Gupta era are rare, yet it is reasonable to assume that 'socketed' and ‘tangled’ varieties of arrow-heads were continuously in use in India. [19] The sculptural evidence of the use of archery in India during our period is not wanting. Panels of Ellora[20] (8th century AD) generally show bow along with other weapons. Also Siva has been shown as holding a very long bow. [21] Similarly, sculptures at Khajuraho depict bow which is slightly less than the height of its wielder and it was kept slung on the left shoulder. [22] The Jain goddess Chakreswari can be seen holding a bow in her left hand and a barbed arrow in her right hand in the Dilwara temple. [23] Several sculptures representing Rama and Laksmana holding bow and arrow have been found in the Gupta and post-Gupta art.

Based on the material of which they were made, the bows have been classified as *karmuka* made of *tala* (Palmyra), *kodanda* made of *daru* (*dhanvana*) and *dhanusa* made of *srnga* (bone or horn). [24] "*Venu*, *sarsa*, *salaka*, *dandasana* and *naracha* were different kinds of arrows. The edges of arrows were made of iron, bone, or wood, as to cut, rend or pierce. [25] Arrowheads were of different kinds e.g., "Aramukha" (serrated), *'churapra'* (with a razor blade), *'gopuchh’* (like the tail of the cow),

ardhachandra (crescent-headed), *'suchimukha'* (needle-shaped), *'dvibhalla'* (double spear-head), *'karnika'* (like the petal of a flower) and *'kaktunda'* (like the back of a crow), etc. [26] Each type was meant for a specific purpose. *'Ardhachandra'* was used for aiming at the throat; *'suchunukha'* for piercing the chain armour, *'bhalla'* for aiming or intersecting the arrow of the enemy, *'batsdanta'* for cutting the string of the enemy's bow, *'Karnika'* for cutting the iron objects, etc.[27] "The crescent shape is common both to India and Africa and we hear of it in Roman times; the blunt, pointless heads are said to have been used for killing birds without drawing blood or injuring the plumage." [28] Bow-strings, according to Kautilya were made of *murva* (sansviera, roxburghiana), *arka* (catotropis gigantia), '*sana'* (Hemp), *gavedhu* (coin barbata), *venu* (bamboo bark) and *snayu* (sinew). [29]

The *Dhanurveda Samhita* recommended that bow-string made of silk was the best and next to that were sinews of deer, entrails of the buffalo or goat, bamboo bark or threads of cotton. [30]

Bows were either simple or composite. Simple bow was made of wood but composite ones were made of horn and sinew.

Regarding the size and length of the bow the *Siva Dhanurveda* says, "A good bow is that which is a little less strong than its bearer. For that which is precious is not the bow, but the bow-man. If he is troubled

by the bow, he cannot shoot with ease. Hence, the size of a good bow should be in proportion to the strength of its bearer. The bow which measures five and a half cubits is recognised to be the best.... According to some authorities, however, the bow should measure nine *vitastis* (4½ cubits);" the length of a horn-bow should be 3½ cubits. [31]

Bow with odd number of joints was regarded well but the one with even numbers i.e., four, six or eight, as a bad bow. [32] The normal length of an arrow was three cubits. [33]

Normally the arrows were made *of sara*, reed and bamboo,[34] but the arrows made of iron, which were often used for killing elephants, were also known to the epic[35] writers and the later authors. The tradition of bone arrows is very old in this country, and was continued even during our period. Arrows belonging to the 5th century AD have been discovered at Kausambhi; Bangarh, Vidisa, Hastinapur, etc., and those belonging to the period 8th-10th centuries AD have been dug out at Rupar, [36] Tripuri and other sites.

Poisoned Arrows

Poisoned arrows have been detailed in the *Rigveda* and were distinct from other arrows. [37] An arrow dipped in a particular type of poison which could cause biting madness is mentioned in ancient works. "Whoever is pierced by the arrow prepared from grains of *Salmali*

(Bombax hepataphllum) and *Vidari* (Liquorice) reduced to powder and mixed with the powder *of mulavat-sanabha* (a kind of poison) and smeared over with the blood of *chuchundari*(masu rat) bites some ten other persons, who in their turn bite others.[38] Arrows treated with poison were used by kashmiri soldiers late in our period. [39]

Arrows with small arrow-heads were found to be extremely useful as poisonous arrows. "Those grooved along the sides, or roughend under the point, were charged with viscous poison."[40] When a young mountaineer of Vindhyan forest was presented to Harsa who was searching his sister "the young man's hand seemed busily engaged with *avikarna* arrow, having its point dipped in a potent poison…"[41]

Fire Arrows

The use of fire arrows against the enemy was very well known to the ancient Hindus. The inflammable powder was prepared in a number of ways. "A stick of *visvasaghati* painted with the mixture and wound round with a bark made of hemp, zinc, and lead, is a fire arrow (to be hurled against the enemy)." [42] They were, at times, very effectively used against the enemy. When Kandarapa, a general of Harsa of Kashmir attacked Rajapuri he "threw into the melee burning arrows smeared over with vegetable oil, struck by which the enemies caught fire. Believing that he knew (the use of) the weapon of fire *(agneya astra)*, they became

frightened and fled in bewilderment, cursing their return." [43]

It may, however, be noted that the use of fire arms and poisoned arrows was forbidden by Manu. [44] Nevertheless it did continue to be in vogue and *Manasollasa* recommended their use against the elephants. [45]

Inscribed Arrows

To inflate ego and exalt personal glory of the archer the arrows were, at times, inscribed with his name. The epic heroes[46] had their names inscribed, on their arrows and the practice continued during our period, [47] Sindhuraja Parmara (994-1020 AD) while hunting is reported to have wounded an antelope, a pet animal of a Naga Princess Sasiprabha, with an engraved arrow which read *"Navina Shashaka Sindhurdja."* [48]

The arrows were usually feathered.[49] The feathers recommended for use were of crow, swan, *sasada*, hawk, peacock, vulture, *kraunch*, [50] and also of goose *(hamsa)*, osprey *(matsyada krauncha)*, and wild cock *(kukkuta)*. Six *angulas* was considered to be the normal length of those feathers. However, those used for the arrows of bow-horn were much longer i.e., 10 *angulas*. Normally four feathers were tied with the sinew or thread at the back-end of each arrow. [51]

Barbed Arrows

Barbed arrows were also quite popular in India. The barbs could be

of *different* types: incipient, straight, curved and very artistically curved.[52] It was a barbed arrow of the Mollois which had wounded Alexander.[53] Such arrows have been discovered from several proto-historic sites.

The range of arrow-shot is not directly available but it can be inferred from the discussion about the distance at which targets for practice in archery were placed. Accordingly, the effective range of an arrow has been worked out at 120 yards and that of an iron arrow about 90 yards. [54]

The quivers were variously termed as *isudhi*[55] *tunira* and *upasanga.* [56] It is believed that two quivers were jointly tied to the back of an archer. This was done to ensure sufficient supply of arrows. [57]

To avoid the effects of friction caused by the bow-string on hands, hand-guard *(hastaghna)* were used by the warriors. [58]

Like arrows, bows were also kept in some sort of covering or the bow-cases, which were of purely Indian origin, and were not known to other countries. [59]

Cross-Bow

A word about the sophistication of bow in the shape of 'cross-bow' It is believed that it had come into use in Europe in the beginning of the 11th century AD and is supposed to have been used by William's forces in

1066 AD. However, it was a chief weapon of the crusaders in the 12th century AD. Cross-bow was "a miniature ballista, a small stiff-bow being set crosswise at the end of a stock. Eventually the bow was made of steel, being drawn either by a cord and pulley, or by a rack and pinion, and discharging a short square ball, with an iron head, wooden shaft, and leather 'feathers.' The weapon was heavy, slow to operate, and did not work in wet weather."[60] The advantages of the weapon were accurate range of about 100 yards, ease of operation even by untrained and physically weak soldiers who were not strong enough to draw a long bow, and were extremely good for loop-hole shooting. [61] The cross-bow came to be used in India in the reign of Iltutmish (1210-1236 AD) [62]. It might have entered the armouries of Indian kings towards the close of our period.

SWORD

If the bow was a matchless weapon of close support, sword was an excellent weapon of close-combat. It signified man's phallic potential and symbolised his martial prowess. It personified heroism and the will to resist all aggression. It was a declaration of man's manhood and was regarded as a decent gift of gods to man. The sword appeared with the discovery of iron which was abundant in India. It was considered by the epic warriors to be the foremost weapon, next only to the bow.[63] In

addition to a bow and the coat-of-mail the knights wore it as a part of their uniform.[64] It was called *asi,*[65] *nistrimsa,* [66] *khadaga,* [67] *manakhdaga*[68] and *karvala*[69] According to S.D. Singh *asi* meant a long sword, *khadaga* a broad one and *nistrimsa* a short sword. [70] *Savaka* was a sword with bells.[71] *Sastri* was a small sword or perhaps a dagger. [72]

The *Brhatsamhita* and the *Agnipurana* lay down that "a good sword must not be longer than fifty-finger breadth or shorter than twenty-five. The best sword measured fifty inches, the next best forty six inches and an inferior one, thirty six inches. [73] Further, "A good sword is one which is long, light, sharp, tough and flexible".[74]

"Swords were generally made of Pandrara iron found in Jangala country, black iron of Anup, white iron of Dsarna, gold-coloured iron of Kalinga and oily iron of Kamboja. [75]" Swords made in *khat* were known for their luster and of *Rsika* for their felling power. Swords made in Anga were noted for their sharpness and withstanding mighty blows and of Surparaka for durability. [76]

Regarding the varieties of the sword the *Arthashastra*[77] listed three types. *Nistrimsa* was a sword with a crooked handle; *mandalagra* was an erect sword with disc at the top and *asivashti* was a sword which was sharp and long. The hilt or the handles were to be "made of horn of rhinoceros, buffalo, of the tusk of elephants, of wood or of the root of

bamboo."[78] It may be that the modern *'khukri* resembles *nistrimsa,* modern *kirch asivashti.* It is however, difficult to describe the shape of the *mandalagra* which might have been like modern "leaf-shaped *pattisa."*[79]

Representations of all these swords can be seen in the frescoes and sculptures at Ajanta.[80] Tinnevally urn burials have revealed blades of *kirich* as well as *pattisa.*[81]

During our times the sword hilts of the high placed nobility appear to have been highly embellished while those of ordinary soldiers were without any *decorations.* Harsa's sword was studded with pearls; [82] so were the swords of the Kashmiri high class gentry. [83] The sword sheaths were made of leather or wood. [84] Describing the swords of the young mountaineer brought to Harsa by a tributary chief in Vindhyan forests, Bana says: "... his huge broad loins were rendered formidable by a sword. The end of which was anointed with quick silver and its handle was made of polished horn... it was wrapped in a short black antelope skin as in a woven covering and its sheath was adorned with the spotted skin of a citrake snake…[85]

Although the sword was usually worn on the left, hung from a waist-belt[86] but at Sanchi and Bharhut they have been depicted as suspended from the left shoulder with the help of a belt. [87] However, the

Agnipurana firmly enjoins that the sword should be slung on the left, attached to the waist. [88] They were also hung on the right side. [89]

Not only were the swords used in hand-to-hand fight but were also found effective against elephants. [90] *Badhas* were a special category of Harsa's soldiers who could fight the elephants. [91]

After the death of his father, Rajyavardhana in dismay and deep anguish, threw away the sword and implored Harsha;"Dismissing all the sports of youth, deliver your bosom like Vishnu to the embraces of glory. I have abandoned the sword." [92] The sword was regarded such a sacred weapon that its casting away signified abandoning worldly pleasures. Its skilful use in battle brought glory, "Hard strokes of swords, falling upon the cuirassed panels of enemies' breasts spilt forth not only sparks but also glory" Herd Strokes of swords, falling upon the harassed panels of economics" When king Ananta of Kashmir (1028-1063 AD) fought out a fierce action to suppress the revolt of Tribhuvana, "King Ananta, whose sword became covered with flesh and blood (until it looked like) a club; moved in the battle like a Bhairava… when the king returned from the battle, the hilt of his sword, which had become fixed in his firm grasp, could (only) be removed from his hand after sometime by sprinkling milk (on it)." [94]

The Indian swords had become well known for their superior

qualities and were very popular with the Arabs. Debal was famous for the manufacture of swords. [95] An early Arab poet Hellal giving the account of the flight of Hemyarites says that while they were running away under the shower of arrows, "hard Indian swords were penetrating them." [96] The sculptural remains of the Palas of Bengal (8th-12th century AD), particularly the Buddhist deities, have the swords engraved thereupon. A large number of swords can also be seen in the plastic and pictoral art of the period. [97] Several specimens of decorated swords belonging to the Chalukyan period have been found at the *viragala*. (tombstone of military heroes). [98] Sword was the most popular weapon at Khajuraho, [99] and has been classified into various categories such as double-edged, straight swords, thrust swords, swords with axe-ends, cut-swords, plough-shaped swords and curved swords. [100] Therefore, it would be seen that the sword as a weapon of war has been dominant throughout our period and, of course, continued to remain so for centuries to come.

SPEARS AND JAVELINS

Spears and javelins stand out prominently among the ancient weapons,[101] and form a generic class by themselves.[102] Weapons with sharp edges like the 'plough-share,' were included in this class of weapons. Some of them, like javelins, could be thrown at the enemy from a distance and could be regarded as weapons of close support. But this

occasional use of javelins in the role of *'mukta'* weapons does not entitle them to be categorized as such and primarily they remained as weapons of 'close-combat.

Spears

(a) *Rsti and Rambani*: *Rsti* was the weapon of the *Rigveda.*[103] Carried by Maruts on their shoulders. It positively meant spear.[104]

(b) *Shakti:* In the days of the *Mahabhdrata,* Shakti was made of iron and was a sharp weapon.[105] It was "two cubits long .... It has sharp tongue, a horrible claw.... It is as broad as a fist and goes very far. It must be taken up and thrown with two hands. Its movements are of six kinds."[106] The commentator to the *Arthasastra* defined shakti as "A metallic weapon, four hands long, and like the leaf of *karavira* and provided with, a handle like a cow's nipple.[107]

(c) *Bhindivala* : The commentator to the *Arthasastra* defines *bhindivala* or *bhindipala* as "a rod with heavy top." According to the *Nitiprakashika* it had a "crooked body; its head, which is bent and broad, is one cubit long and it is a hand in circumference. It is first whirled thrice and then thrown against the foot of the enemy. When throwing the *bhindivala,* the left

foot should be placed in front." [108]

(d) *Prasa* : According to *Kautilya*, *prasa* belonged to the class of weapons with edges like plough-share and the commentator of the *Arthasastra* describes it as "a weapon, 24 inches (*angulas)* long with two handles."[109] But according to the *Nitiprakashika* its length was seven cubits and it was made of red-colour ed bamboo with a metal head and was sharp at the foot end. It had silken tufts for its decoration.[110] When Harsha's mother queen Yasovati proceeded to commit *sati,* she had in her hand the *prasha* of her deceased husband.[111]

The Spear was a very effective weapon of close-combat and was much sought for. According to the *Tarikh-Yamini*, the troops of Jaipala had fought against those of Mahmud for several days, drawing blood from wounds inflicted by swords and spears, and the fight was so fierce that the 'Spears were tired of penetrating the rings of the coats-of-mail.' In one of his expeditions when Mahmud had reached as far as the river of Waihind, he was met by Brahmapala son of Anandpala at the head of a valiant army which amongst its weapons had blue spears.[113] Spears and many other weapons were found scattered in the battlefield of Tarain after the rout of Prithviraja III in 1192 AD.[114]

Lance

(a) *Kunta:* The *Arthasastra* included *kunta* in the category of weapons with 'edges like ploughshares' and its commentator describes it as "a wooden rod, 7, 6 or 5 hands in length."[115] The *Nitiprakashika* says that it had an iron body with a sharp top and six edges. Its length varied from six to ten cubits and was round at the foot end. It was wielded in six different ways. [116] According to Sukracharya,[117] the length of the best, the medium and the inferior *kuntas* should be 16, 14 and 12 *angulas* respectively, and the breadth of its head should be two to three angulas.

(b) *Kasuari;* It was a short lance."[118]

(c) *Srka*: It has been translated as 'lance'[119] or 'wooden shafts with metal spikes.' May be that *srka* were ordinary bamboo sticks and were used by common soldiers.[120] '

Lance was the principal weapon of the cavaliers of our age. Yuan Chwang mentions it as a most important weapons of Harsa's soldiery.[121] In a coin attributed to Ratnadeva of the 12th century AD; a rude sketch of a horseman charging with a lance has been carved.[122] D.B. Pandey quotes numerous coins to show that the lance was a very popular weapon with the cavaliers of the 9th-10th centuries AD.[123] Narrating the origin of the

Sambhar lake, the author of the *Prithvirajvijaya* says that it had been created by the planting of the lance by Vasudeva (ancestor of Chahamanas) on the suggestion and blessing of Vidyadhar, whose magic pill he had returned.

In the first bat the of Tarain (1191 AD), Muhammad Ghori, on a horse back led a furious charge against the Hindu Centre and shattered the teeth of Govind Rai with his lance.[124]

Javelins

(a) Kautilya put it in the category of weapons with edges like ploughshare[125] and his commentator describes it as "a rod with an arrow-like edge, and 'four, four and a half or five hands long."[26] According to the *Nitiprakashika* its body was made of wood with a metal head *of* the shape of a bunch of flowers of three cubit length and red coloured.[127] It could be wielded in three ways. Avanti, Magadha and Daksinatya (South Indian) were well known for the manufacture of this weapon.[128] A.L. Basham opined that *tomara* was a long lance and was used in fighting from the elephants.[129]

(b) *Kanya:* Kanya is "a metallic rod both ends of which are triangular. This is held in the middle and is 20, 22 or 24 inches long."[130]

(c) *Karpana,* It also falls into Kautilya's weapons with 'edges like plough shares and the commentator felt that it was an arrow or a

dart which was to be thrown with hand. Its edges weighed 7, 8 or 9 *karshas* and a skilful person could hurl it as far as the length of hundred bows.[131] Yuan Chwang mentions javelin as one of the weapons of Indian soldiery.[132] It was the javelin of Govind Rai which pierced the arm of Muhammad Ghori in 1191, and sent him tumbling home.[133] According to Jadunath Sarkar, a javelin could effectively take on its object at 30 to 40 paces.[134]

Bhalla (Bhala)

It had a shaft made of bamboo and a long blade. It was, however, used very rarely by the cavaliers.[135] According to Fakhr-i-Mudbir, no *bhalla* is better than the Indian *bhala.*[136]

Besides, various other weapons with edges like ploughshare *hataka* (a rod with three or four pointed edges), *sula* (a pointed-rod without any fixed length), *varahakarna* (a rod with its edges shaped like the ears of a boar) and *trasike* (a metallic weapon like *prasa*).[137]

MACE

Mace (club), a very heavy weapon of close-combat, was a prominent weapon of ancient India. According to Plutarch, Alexander "received a blow on his neck from a club" during the storming of the Malloi capital.[138] Ancient works describe three varieties of the clubs

namely, musala (pointed rod made of khadira), yashti (similar to musala) and gada (a long and heavy rod). It was made of iron as well as wood.[139] But according to the Nitiprakashika, it was made of sharp iron, had broad head with 100 spikes and its sides were also fitted with spikes. "It is a formidable weapon, four cubits long, and its body equals a carriage-axle in measure. The head is adorned with a crest; it is covered with a golden belt, and is able to crush elephants and mountains."[140] Twenty different motions are ascribed to the *gada*. By means of gunpowder it was also thrown out as a projectile.[141]

Shukra describes the mace as of octagonal in shape, of breast's height and having strong handle.[142] The *Ausanasa Dhanurveda* prescribes fifty, forty and thirty *angulas* length for the best, the middling and the worst mace, respectively. As far as its shape is concerned it could be pear-shaped, quadrilateral and like the palmyra root.[143] Lot of strength and stamina was the first requisite for wielding of the mace which had peculiar movements and manoeuvres of its own. It could be hurled at the foe from a distance as well as could engage the enemy at a close proximity. It could be revolved about in the midst of foes and could smite the enemy in front.[144] Twenty movements listed by the *Salyaparva*[145] have also been adopted with approval by *Nitiprakasika*.[146] Besides, *musala, yashti* and *gada* of the *Arthasastra,* G.N. Pant includes, *parigha*,

mudgara, sthuna, laguda, musundi (bhusundi) and *drughana* also under the general category of maces. While describing the army of Harsa on march, Bana mentions "furiously running crowds armed with clubs..." and striking hares like polo-balls.[147]

The use of mace as a weapon was considered very respectable and the epithet of *gadahasta* was adopted by a number of kings. One such instance is provided by Dewai stone inscription of Bhima (921-60 AD).[148]

In a war between Mahipala and Masud, when the latter was talking to Sharfu-l-Mulk, Gopala, son of Mahipala gave him a severe blow with his mace. As a result, Masud broke his nose and lost two of his teeth.[149]

DAGGER

Dagger known as *Maustika*[150] (fist sword) any *vasi*[151] "was a projectile hand weapon and was also used for thrusting at close quarters and was a personal weapon of the rank and file of infantry as well as elephantry."[152]

Its length was one span, had a sharp end, high neck and was broad in the middle and was ornamented.[153] it was a small and handy weapon and could be wielded effectively in a number of ways. Its qualities have been eulogized by Vaisampayana.[154] V.S. Agarwal mentions clay figurines of soldiers of tall stature with a girdle and a dagger, found at Ahichchatra belonging to 6^{th}-7^{th} century AD.[155] Someshvara in his

Manassollasa mentions sports to be played with daggers.[156] According to Somdevasuri, the dagger was tied around the waist.[157]

King Vakpatiraja II (11th century AD), killed Amba Prasada, ruler of Aghat Ahad, (the old capital of Mewar), and with a dagger rent his mouth asunder.[158]

BATTLE AXE

The battle-axe was known to the people of the *Rigveda* but it was rarely used as a weapon of war. To the epics it was known under various names e.g. *Parasu, Parasyadha, Kulisa, Kuthara* and was regarded as a weapon of the high nobility.[160] Kautilya classified it under the category of razor-like weapons and he lists its three types namely; *parasu* (a scymitar, semi-circular and 24 inches long), *Kuthara* (a kind of axe well known) and *pattasa* (same as parasu but shaped like a trident at both ends). In another place *pattasa* is said to be of man's height, with two sharp blades and a top which is sharp. The hand is protected by a handle. [161] It has been termed as the uterine brother of the sword. [162] Its qualities were felling and splitting. It could be manipulated in six different ways i.e., raising high threateningly, striking with it slowly or quickly, raising it rapidly, making it fixed and making as if one had nothing in hand. [163] The battle-axe has been illustrated in various sculptures[164] and coins[165] of early centuries of the Christian era. On the basis of art representations of the

battle-axe, it has been divided into eight different catergories by G.N. Pant. [166]

VAJRA (THUNDERBOLT)

It is a mythical weapon. Nothing could stand either its destructive power or its splendour. Made originally for the destruction of demon *vrtra,* "It shines brightly, with the light of a *krore* of suns, and it resembles the fire which shone at the dissolution of the world. It fangs extend to a *yojana* (5-5/44 miles) in length, and its tongue is most horrible. It resembles the night of destruction at the end of the world, and is covered with 100 knots. Its breadth is five *Yojanas* and its length ten *yojanas.* Its periphery is covered with sharp points; in colour it resembles lightening; a broad strong handle is fixed to it. Its movements are four in number. [167] Indra's *vajra* was originally made of stone and then of bone, before it assumed its final shape in metal. [169] They continued to be mentioned even as late as the 11th century A.D. [169] *Vajra* is represented in ancient arts and tribal and other ancient Indian coins. Metal thunderbolts of our period have been excavated from Sirpur district Raipur and other sites.

NOOSE

It was a kind of lariat or lasso. It was well known to the *Mahabharta.*[170] According to the *Nitiprakashika,* it had a triangular form,

and was composed of very small scales, made of metal. Its circumference was one span and was decorated with leaden balls. It had three movements [171]

The *Agnipurana* describes it "*A pasa* should measure ten cubits in length, its end terminating in a loop, and its face should be retained in the hand. It should be constructed of the strings made of hemp, or of flax, or *munja* grass, or of *bhanga* or of sinews of animals, or of leather, or of other things of which a strong thread may be made. It may also be made of thirty pieces of thread twisted together."[172]

"The learners should make a running knot in *pasa;* and having held one end of it with the left hand, and twisted it round on the right; they should turn it over their hands, and afterwards throw it on the throat of human, figure covered with skin. After this, they should try to throw the string on the neck of a horse at full gallop or of animals jumping about, or such as are moving fast. [173] There were eleven different methods of employing this weapon. [174]

In ancient sculpture, the noose has been shown in the hands of deities like Durga, Siva, etc. In a Mysore lintel of the 12th Century AD, noose has been shown in the hands of Brahma. [175] Its representations on coins are also not wanting. [176] The Hunas were well known for the use of lasso or noose. One of their "notable tactics in close fighting was for one

man to entangle the net while has was intent on parrying the sword blows of another. [177] In the north Indian art noose is held by Varuna, Durga and several other deities.

DISCUS OR QUOIT

Chakra is a very old weapon and has been named as the weapon of Indra in the *Rigveds.* [178] In the Mahabharata it assumed the name of *Sudarshana-Chakra* in the hand of Krishna. [179] It was one of the chief weapons of Vishnu. Kautilya[180] grouped it along with the movable machines and his commentator describes it as a disc. Later, it has been spoken of as a weapon hurled from a distance and it cut off one or the other limb of the enemy. [181] G. Oppert, on the authority of the *Nitiprakashika* and *Shukraniti* described it as circular disc with a quadrangular hole in its midst with circumference of two spans or ten cubits. It had five or seven motions. He rightly compared it with the quoits of the Sikhs. [182] Its various uses were "feeling, whirling, rending, breaking, severing and cutting." [183]

SATGHNI

Because of the complexity of its nature and variety of its uses *sataghani* meaning a 'hundered killer' has been thought to be of two types, the first as a defensive weapon and the second as a projectile.

The first type of *sataghani* was placed on the walls of a fortified place. Indraprastha, [184] Ayodhya[185] and Lanka[186] were all defended by *sataghanis.* Kautilya termed it as a movable machines and his commentator describes it as "a big pillar with immense number of sharp points on its surface and situated on the top of a fort wall." [187] It is, therefore, clear that the *sataghani"* formed an essential part of city's defensive war-heads. P.C. Chakravarty[188] rightly concludes that *sataghnis* were kept on the fort walls to be hurled at the enemy forces attempting escalade. Since they have been termed as movable machines, it is quite likely that to facilitate movement, these heavy blocks of wood or stone, were fitted with wheels. [189]

The second category of *Sataghani* is described by the *Nitiprakasika*[190]. It was made of black iron, was four cubits long; round and was provided with thorns. It looked like a *mudgara*, resembled *gada* in its movements, and could be hurled from a distance. However, it would be too much to believe what Oppert has said that "it was hurled out of enormous tubes by means of gunpowder." [191]

After discussing both these varieties, P.C. Chakravarty concludes, "It is not improbable that the second variety of *sataghanis* resembled the first-in general appearance. Only they were shorter, lighter, altogether handier and hence used as projectiles." [192]

The Sling

The sling as a weapon of offence and defence is supposed to have been in use in the Indus valley as it was in early Turkistan and Sumer. This is proved by the finds of sling-pellets of baked clay at various sites of the Indus valley excavations. [193] During our period the weapon was particularly favourite of the Kashmiri soldiers. “With a round but sharp stone tied to its ends, they flung the stone with unerring accuracy at the target.” [194] It was used in wars of the times of Jayapida. The sling remained a popular weapon in the valley till the time of Raja Gulab Singh “Who put a stop to the frequent mimic battles between youth of different wards of Srinagar who used to turn out with slings and stones and played a very serious and earnest game.” [195]

BOMMERANG

The boomerang is described in the *Nitiprakshika* as having a knot at the foot and a long head. It is one hand in breadth. Its middle part is bent to the extent of a cubit. It is sharp, black coloured and two cubits long. Whirling, pulling and breaking are its three actions. “It is a good weapon for charioteers and foot-soldiers. [196] They were made of wood, iron and even ivory. The stick was flat and curved. “When thrown, a whirling motion is imparted to the weapon which causes it to return to the place from which it was thrown. The use of this weapon was known to

the Bhils and other aboriginal tribes of Rajasthan. It is mentioned in the *Mahabharata,* [197] where the commentator explains it as "a small board, flat and crooked, to be thrown out of the hand, well known amongst the Dravida. [198]

THE WAR MACHINES

The world *Yantra* denotes a contrivance of any kind. [199] *Yantras* are mentioned in the epics to signify implements of war. The forts of the *Ramayana* were usually protected with the help of *Yantras.* [200] In the *Sabhaparva* of the Mahabharata, yantras formed an integral part of the defensive armament of the forts. [201] That fort was said to be in distress in which the yantras, wells and moats are in a state of disrepair…"[202]

Kautilya classified the war-machines into immovable and movable *yantras.* [203]

Immovable Yantras

From their very nature these were the heavier weapons, as explained by the commentator:

a. Sarvatobhadra: A cart, which could be revolved rapidly. It hurled stones in all directions. It was sometimes fitted with wheels and then called *bhumirikayantara*.

b. *Jamadagnya:* also called a *yantra,* which was a large

machine to shoot arrows.

c. *Bahumukha:* it was a tower (*attalaka*) situated on the top of a fort and provided with a leather cover. It faced all directions. From this place a number of archers directed their arrows on all sides". "These were of the nature of catapults and ballistae used by the ancient Hebrews, Greeks and Romans…[204]

d. *Visvasghati:* It was a cross-beam placed above a ditch at the entrance of a fort, and so placed as to be caused to fall down and kill enemies when approaching.

e. *Sanghati:* It was a long pole used for setting on fire various parts of the forts.

f. *Yanaka:* It is difficult to understand its true nature as it has been described by the commentator only as a pole or a rod mounted on a wheel so as to be thrown against enemies.

g. *Parjanyaka:* The commentator is not clear himself about this *yantra* and he believes that it was either a 'water machines' used for extinguishing fire or a contrivance fifty hands in length which was kept outside the fort and was hurled against enemies when approaching. Anyway, it was lighter and less conspicuous than the *visvasghati.*

h. *Ardhabahu:* These were two pillars, placed one opposite the other, and could kill enemies under its weight when caused to fall down.

i. *Urdhvabahu:* It was a single large pillar so placed at a high place that it could be thrown against the enemy.

Movable Yantras

a. *Panchalika:* "A big wooden board with immense sharp points on its surface. This is put in the midst of water outside the fort wall to arrest the onward march of an enemy. It appears to be in the nature of a hidden low obstacle to prevent the enemy coming closer to the fort walls by making moat-crossing operations difficult.

b. *Devadanda:* A long pole with iron nails which was placed on the fort walls. It reminds one about the modern practice of planting pointed glass pieces on the walls of houses to make wall crossing difficult.

c. *Sukarika:* It was of the nature of a shield to protect towers against enemy missiles like stones. The *Ssukarikas* were of the nature of leather covers or bags filled with cotton or wood. According to others, it was a mat made of the bamboo-bark and was covered with leather.

d. *Hastivaraka*: A long rod with usually two or three points used for driving back elephants.

e. *Talavrnta*: A disc like a fan.

f. *Sprktala*: A rod with sharp points on its surface.

g. *Kuddala*: A spade.

h. *Asphatima*: A bag of leather with a rod to produce high sound. Its nature and purpose is vague.

i. *Audhghatima*: A device used for pulling down towers.

j. *Trisula*: A trident.

It may be noted here that Kautilya mantions *yantrapasana* (stones which can be thrown by machines), *gospanapasana* (stones which are hurled by a rod called *gospana*) and stones thrown by hand (*mushtipasana*) as other weapons.[205]

This shows that some of the immovable machines mentioned above used stones as their ammunition. Since the Roman catapult or *onager* also used stone missiles, we can be right in assuming that Indian machines were somewhat like the Greek or Roman catapults. The Arabs definitely used catapults in their conquest of Sindh. Lanepoole calls them stone-slings,[206] which (five of them) were sent by sea to meet Kasim at Daibul for siege work. 'Great red flag flaunted on the top of a tall temple …. The

order came from Hajjaj to 'fix the stone sling and shorten its foot and aim at the flagstaff. So the gunners lowered the trajectory and brought down the pole with a shrewd shot…."[207] These catapults were so heavy that it required a crew of 500 to operate each one of them. On the authority of the Chachchama, it has been surmised by S.H. Hodivala, that the *managonels* and *ghozaks* were used and "stones and arrows thrown from the walls of the fort of Multan."[208]

The *gharwa* (*fardaj*, *gharvasang* or *gharbasang*) was also like the *mangonel*, a ballista, stone-sling or catapult, which hurled large stones.[209] It has been reported by Shams-i-Siraj that during the siege of Nagarkot, both sides were in possession of "*manjaniqs* and that *arada* stones were hurled by both."[210] The *manjaniqs* of numerous types[211] were known to the early Muslim invaders, such as:

a. Manjaniq-i-Dev: A heavy manjaniq.

b. *Manjaniq-i-Ghurivar*: A particular type of (not specified) *manjaniq.*

c. Manjaniq-i-Khan: A manjaniq on wheels.

d. *Arada*: A weapon similar to *manjaniq* which could hurl stones as well as fire on the enemy. It was also of different varieties, e.g., *Arada-i-Ekrui, Arada-i-Garda, Arada-i-Khufta* and *Arada-i-Khan.*[212]

Due to paucity of relevant literature, it has not been possible for us to deter mine the nature and characteristics of each type of *arada*. In the siege of Banasala (Kasmir 1128-49 AD) Kalhana reports that the royal troops used catapults with success.[213]

The use of machines to bombard enemy troops with stones from the ramparts of the forts was also known to the Rajputs of our period.[214] The stones hurled form the top of forts, particularly hill-forts were extremely effective and they frustrated the designs of the besiegers for considerably prolonged periods. In the siege of Banasala during the reign of Jayasinna (1128-49 AD) when Dhanya was tightening his noose round Bhiksu and his followers, the latter fought back with stones and caused havoc in the royal camp. 'The heads, which the stones carried off from the bodies of brave soldiers, appeared with their streams of blood, like beehives (thrown down by stone hits) from the top of trees with the bees issuing from them."[215]

Battering Rams

It may be recorded that the use of battering rams was known to India. In decade the siege of Kiraj, when the people had revolved Junaid, "maid use of battering rams and battered the walls of the town with them until they were breached." [216] It may however, be said that the use of this weapon was not widely known. Here are some of the details which have

come down to us from a European writer: “In the early period battering rams were somewhat clumsy and large, on six wheels, and perhaps 15 feet long; at the front was a round turret about 18 feet high, from the inside of which the ram was suspended on a rope so that it could be swung. The head of the ram, shaped like an axe, would be forcibly inserted into the gate or the wall and then levered left and right to make the walls collapse. Long sharp-headed levers were also used by individual…. The operators of battering rams were obviously in great danger from defending archers, and so were given continuous covering fire from their own archers in mobile towers.” [217] When the walls were strong, scaling ladders were preferred to the battering rams, which appear to be the case in India.

SHIELDS

The use of shield has been known to the Indian soldiery right from the very early period. Since they were usually made of hide, *charma* was the usual term denoting them.[216] They were also known as *saravara* and *saravara.* [219] The shields were decorated with numerous representations of sun, moon and stars. [220]

During the days of Alexander’s invasion, the Indians carried bucklers made of undressed ox-hide which were as long as height of their wielders. [221] The *Manasollasa*[222] and *Yuktikalpataru*[223] give detailed

description of the shields. The *charma* is "an arm which covers or protects the body….it should be firm, light and tough. That which is insufficient to cover the body, or is heavy, soft, easily penetrable or made of offensive material is defective."[224]

The shields were made of ox-hide, [225] creeper, leather and wood, [226] metal[227] bamboon and cane. [228] The shields were of the following types:

a. *Veti:* It was a kind of mat to cover the body and was made of Koshthavalli, a creeper. [229]

b. *Charma:* As explained earlier, its very title denotes that these shields were made of leather[230] and were in great demand. [231]

c. *Hastikarna:* It was a sort of a board to cover the body[232] & derived its name from its shape which resembled the ear of an elephant. [233]

d. *Talamula:* A wooden shield[234]

e. *Kavata:* A wooden board[235] resembling the panel of a door.[236]

f. *Kitika:* A shield made of leather or of bamboo bark. [237]

g. *Apratihata:* A shield used to protect oneself against elephants. [238] When its edges were covered with metallic plate, it was called valahakanta. [239]

The shields were of different shapes such as rectangular, round, bell shaped, of irregular shape, oblong, wheel-like and hemispherical. [240]

The representation of shields can be seen in ancient Indian Sculptural reliefs and frescoes. [241] Round shields can be discerned from the Gandhara sculptures of the 1st or 2nd centuries. G.N. Pant is of the opinion that these shields were made of the hides of rhinoceros or buffalo which in the middle ages was the chief material for the shields. [242] The cavalry shields of the 5th century AD having criss-cross design can be seen in the Gupta and post-Gupta sculpture. [243] The hemispherical shields, also popular during the post-Gupta period, were preferred by the infantry. [244] The oblong shields are seen in the Bhubneswara frieze depicting war-procession. The well known Konarka horse is seen trampling soldiers with circular shields in their hands. [245] The Khajuraho sculptures depict a large number of shields which were carried by all the foot soldiers, without exception. [246]

The shields have no less been represented in the ancient paintings. Soldiers with swords and shields are seen in the rock painting of Mahadeo hills, Pachmarhi (M.P.) and Barkhera. At Ajanta, three types of shields, parrying type, round and curved-oblong are represented. According to Mrs. Cordington, "round hide-shields are common in modern India, elephant and rhinoceros hide being chiefly used. The little parrying shield to be seen at Ajanta is of iconographic interest and is seen in the sculpture of Deccan and South India also. [247] Normally, the shields

were delicately ornamented" with metal bosses, stars, crescents, tassels, etc." [248] The Konarka sculpture depicts highly ornamented shields. According to Egerton of Tatton this practice of shield ornamentation was continued up to the Mughal period. "The large shields of damascened steel offer a rich field for ornamentation in gold work, the best of them are made at Delhi and Lahore."[249]

ARMOUR

Body Armour

The use of the terms like *varman*,[250] *kavacha*[251] *sannaha* in the *Rgvcda* prove that some type of body armour or corselet was in use by the warriors of the Vedic age. In the *Mahabharata* metal armour, besides coats of quilted cotton, are referred to[252]. The Ramayana warriors usually protected their bodies with defensive armour[253]. Describing the body armour of Porus in the battle of Hydaspes, Arrian wrote "it was shot-proof and remarkable for its strength and the closeness with which it fitted his person….But he was wounded in the right shoulder where only he was unprotected by mail. [254] However, it is not possible to decide whether Prous' metal armour was of the cuirass type or of the interlinked chain-mail variety.[255] Doubtlessly both varieties of armour, as well as waded coats of quilted-cotton, were known at that time. Different varieties of armour were, *Sirastrana* (cover for the head), *kanthatrana*

(cover for the neck), *kurpasa*(cover for the trunk), *kanchuka*(a coat extending as far as the knee joints), *varavana*(a coat extending as far as the heels), *patta* (a coat without cover for the arms), and *nagodarika* (gloves). [256] *Sirastrana* could be a head piece made of iron which was worn only with the chain mail or cuirass. It may be cloth-folds tied on the head like turban to guard against the blows of weapons. [257] The different varieities of armour made of iron[258] were as under:

a. *Lohajalika:* It was a coat of iron which could cover the whole body including the head and arms.

b. *Patta:* An iron coat with no cover for the arms.

c. *Kavacha:* It was an iron-coat made of detached pieces to cover the head, the trunk and the arms.

d. *Sutraka:* This provided cover only to the waist and the hips.

It is felt that "the loha-jala(iron-net) or *loha-jalika*, was undoubtedly a hauberk of interlinked chain-mail…the *kavacha* appears to have been a cuirass, composed of breast-and back-plates. The *sutraka*, on the other hand, was a jacket of quilted cotton. [259] Lastly, there was a kind of body armour fabricated from hides, hoofs, and horns of certain animals, e.g., "skins with hoofs and horns of tortoise, rhinoceros, bison, elephant or cow."[260] Hema Chandra, a Jain scholar of the 12th centuary AD, record in his work Dvaiashraya Kavya, that "Warriors of Graharipu

wore iron armour." [261] The diffent kinds of armour, as mentioned above, have been referred to by Magha. [262]

The coats-of-mail made of iron, hide, cotton and bark have also been mentioned by the Manasollasa. [263] But the iron-armour, because of its cost, appears to have become a monopoly of the higher classes with the passage of time. [264] According to Shukraniti the body armour was made of "scales of the breadth of a grain of wheat, was of metal and firm, had a protection for the neck and was ornamented on the upper part of the body."[265]

On a number of Gupta coins and on the "Bull and horseman type" coins of the kings of Ohind, the mailed horsemen can be seen. For the head protection, apart from the helmet, as mentioned earlier, the warriors used many other types of head dresses. [266] Cap having semi-circular form with upturned lower end can be seen on the heads of the *Gandhara* soldiers. The Ajanta warriors show close-fitted round cap with conical mounting. [267] The Turks, both the foot soldiers and horse-riders, invariably used body armour. When Alauddin Husain pitched his forces against those of Sultan Yaminu-d-daula, "he cased himself in armour ready for the fight." Auauddin Hussain's infantry protected themselves with 'Karoh', an armour made of raw hide and covered thickly on both sides with wool or cotton. "When the men put it on,they are covered from

head to foot and their ranks look like walls. The wool is so thick that no weapon can pierce it. [269] Horses were adequately caparisoned to protect them against weapons of the enemy. [270]

The war-horse outside-the Konarka main shrine is heavily caparisoned with bosses and bands around his face; its neck has heavy chain armour, and tasseled necklaces, jeweled bracelets on legs and a tasseled breast-band which kept the saddle in position. [271] The war elephants too wore mail-armour (varma). [272] The *Shukraniti* also prescribed coat-of mail for the elephant. “For elephant’s body big leaves resembling wheat-leaves, made of iron, were considered suitable, while for the trunk, iron-nails with sharp edges were deemed the best. Leather was considered the finest material for preparation of elephant armour. [273]

Bana speaks of “hard strokes of swords, falling upon the cuirassed panel of enemies breast[274] and it also mentions enemy helmets. [275] The Arab horsemen “who advanced against Dahir and reached the fort of Baith, were all clad in iron armour. [276] Chand Bardai says, “the horse with his coat-of-mail moves about prancing just like *Induja* (mars) with tightened wings.” And against, “Great din in the Hindu hosts now resounded when they put on their armour, [277] “Damascened gauntlets and breast plates were among articles of war scattered all over the field for miles after the rout of the Hindu army in the second battle of Tarain. [278]

There could not be better evidence than the one provided by Chand Bardai who, while describing Bisaldeva Chauhan's fight against Baluk Rao Chalukya, beautiful brings out that the warriors, their horses and elephants were all protected by armour. "Armour they placed on horses and on elephants; the warriors clad themselves in their armour; the two armies met shield to shield in their ranks…"[279]

FIRE-ARMS AND GUNPOWDER

In this connection it would be interesting to examine the true nature of *aagneya astras.* Kautilya while describes *agnibana*[280], and mentions three recipes- agni dharana, ksepyo-agni-yoga, and vishvasghati. The agni- dharana is said to consist of small balls made of the dung of the ass, camel, goat and sheep, mixed with the wood of saral (pinus longfolia),devadaru (deodar), the leaf of putitrna (leamon grass), guggulu srivestaka (turpentine) and lac. The ksepyo-agni yoga was a fire arm consisting of 'dung of the horse, ass, camel or cattle, mixed with priyala curna (buchanania latifolia), avalguja (vernonia authelmintica), lamp black and bees' wax'. Vishvasghati was composed of 'the powder of all the metals as red as fire or the mixture of the powder of kumbhi, lead , zinc, mixed with the charcoal powder of the flowers of paribhadraka, palasa, and hair, and with oil wax and turpentine'. From the nature of the ingredients of the different composition it would appear that they were

highly inflammable and could not be easily extinguished. About the third and the last recipe, a recent writer remarks: 'The *vishvasghati-agni-yoga* was virtually a bomb which burst and the fragments of metals were scattered in all directions. The *agni-bana* was the fore-runner of the gun shot…. Sometimes the metallic head of the arrow was made of red-hot by charcoal fire and the hot arrow will prove more dangerous than the cool. The aboriginal tribes of Santhals and Kols of Bengal and Bihar shoot bear with red hot arrows, which they say, kill the beasts while cool arrows prove in- effective. It is to be noted that among the war materials collected in the battlefield of Kurukshetra charcoal was one. [281]

Intimately connected with this topic is the question whether the ancient Hindus knew the use of the gunpowder and guns. Sir A.M Elliot tells us that the Arabs learnt the manufacture of gunpowder from India, and that before their Indian connection they had used arrows of naphtha. It is also argued that though Persia possessed saltpetre in abundance, the original home of gunpowder was India. It is said that the Turkish word *top* and the Persian *tupang* or *tufang* are derived from the Sanskrit *dhupa.* The *dhupa* of the Agni Purana means a rocket, perhaps a corruption of the Kautaliyan term *nala dipika*. [282]

We have already know of the term *naraca*, and it is worthy of note that the term appears side by side with *nalika* in the Epics. [283] Evidently

they refer to two distinct types of metallic arrows. The *nalikas* were missiles often barbed. In later days the term meant guns.

The Shukranitisara uses the term *nalika* in this sense and speaks of two kinds of *nalikas*, the large and small answering perhaps to the siege gun and the field gun respectively. The latter was used by horsemen and footmen. The bigger variety which had no wooden stock was carried on wheels. [284] The *agnichurna* or the gunpowder was composed of 4 to 6 parts of saltpetre, one part of sulphur, and one part of charcoal of *arka*, *sruhi* and other trees brunt in a pit and reduced to powder. [285] Here is certain evidence of the ancient rockets giving place to actual guns in warfare. From the description of the composition of gunpowder, a later date is ascribed to the composition of the shukraniti compels us to treat that the work as a composition of the pre-Gupta age. In the Vashishta-Dhanurveda, a later work, *naraka*, *nalika*, *Shataghani* figures as fire arms. [286]

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139. *Niti,* V, 29-30; Oppert, Gustav, op. cit., p. 20.

140. *Sukraniti,* Ch. IV, Sec. VII, 1.424; Chakravarty, op. cit., p. 169.

141. *Ausanasa Dhanurveda,* pp. 39-40.

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169. *Niti,* IV. 45-46.

170. *Agnipurana,* 251, 2ff.

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CHAPTER–V
STRATEGY AND TACTIS IN WAR

The wars in India since the Ancient times were generally of two kinds: *Dharmayudha* and *Kutayudha*, just and unjust wars. This is an arbitrary division from both moral and religion standpoints. Another division, we have noticed, was three fold *dharmavijaya, asurarijaya* and *lobhavijaya* yet another division was *daiva, manusa* and *asura*, according to the weapons used. Here *daiva* and *asura* seem to some extent to belong to the realism of mythology. The manusha kind of war was the only accepted one. Yet another division of wars is seen in the *Manavadharma shastra* land fights, hill and forest figures and sea fightest.[1]

Land fights, then, occupy our foremost attention. Land fights generally induced wars in the plain country, forests and hill regions, though it is to be noticed that the law gives, *Manu*, makes a distribution between battles on the plains and those on the hills and forests. There is yet another recommendation of the law-given that as far as possible wars should be fought away from cities and villages, and on the edge of forest regions. This was due to two reasons. One was not to disturb normal citizen life. The other was the strategic advantage of scoring a victory without much fighting and shedding of blood. Hill wars were not frequent wherever the capital city was a citadel, it was besieged and taken by

storm siege warfare was a land fight the triangular struggle for supremacy in North India is an example of war on the plain in post Harshavardhana northern India to the second battle of *Tarain* between Prithviraja chauhan and Muhammad of Ghur in 1192 A.D. was a land fight were strategy and tactics were used to the utmost degree on both sides and which well deserves to be called an example of a tactical war.

In fact Muhammad *Ghur's* all battles with the contemporary Indian powers may be cited as an instance of a land battle where strategic skill was employed in a large measure.

We do not propose to go into the details of these wars, but shall proceed to an examination of the employment of strategy and tactics in them. Henderson says that strategy, according to the official text book of the British Infantry, is the art of bringing the enemy to battle , while tactics are the methods by which a commander endeavour and to over reach the enemy when battle is joined.[2] He holds that the end of strategy is the pitched-battle. In fact almost every battle that was fought since ancient time in India was a pitched battle in the sense that it was elaborately arranged for by both contending parties.[3]

In other way, the strategy is a comprehensive term. It covers planning of war and conduct of troops to the point of battle. The selection of operational base, lines of communication and possible diversion,

marches of armies and supply points are all covered under this term strategy which decides what and where the combination of forces are to be affected, what fortifications are to be relied upon to thwart enemy advance and provide refuge to forces in distress. Last but not the least it determines camping sites and objective points for each army "strategy is the art of manning war on the map and comprehends the whole theatre of operating. Grand tactics is the art of posting troops upon the battle field according to the characteristics of the ground of bringing than into action, and of fighting upon the ground in contradiction to planning upon a map."[5] Strategy brings the troops to the battle field, tactics begins where strategy ends"[6] Therefore, we may say that strategy deals with the higher plans of warfare, and prepares the frame of work, and the terms of reference, brings the troops to the arena of battle with the help of logistics, and leaves the field commanders to settle their score by applying tactics.[7]

We do study the following concepts into the wider concept of strategy and tactics. In Strategy, the march, the time and season of march, religious ceremonies, order of march, formation for move, navigation, discipline, opposed river crossing, ambuscade, defence and patrolling, site for the battle field, consultation with the astrologers.

In Tactics, Siege of forts, deployment for battle; the battle formations attack, time for the commencement of Action, Harrass,

Exhaust and charge, dismounting for combat, duels, turning the flank and envelopment, intrigues, final assault and employment of reserves, importance of correct deployment, colligation in fighting, night attacks-retreat and pursuit.

STRATEGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The March

The approach march, move forward or advance and was termed as '*yana*' and was one of the six forms of state policy.[8] This operation of war was undertaken to establish contact with the enemy to settle issues that were open to arms. The advance continued when the enemy was forced to withdraw or was conducting planned withdrawal or when he was defeated. The pursuit of fleeing enemy as a part of regular exploitation of success in an action was the third form of this operation.

No expedition could be undertaken unless comparative study of own resources vis-à-vis those of the enemy had been carried out beforehand. "The conqueror should know the comparative strength and weakness of himself and of his enemy and having ascertained the power, place, time, the time of marching and of recruiting the army, and profits and dangers, he should march with his full force…"[9]

Before setting forth against an enemy, at least one fourth army had to be earmarked for security of the base of operation besides, the supplies had to be adequate and treasury was to be full.[10]

The actual march of the enemy is regulated by short and long halts well provided with commissariat, supplies and transport and communication facilities. There are two kinds of march. It may be a slow march when the invader feels that his offensive equipment is not strong enough to break up the enemy, or again when the enemy is making negotiations for peace. Otherwise he may make a quick or even a forced march.[11] In the expeditions undertaken the element of time played a prominent part. The month of *Margashisha* (December) is generally recommended for long marches and *Chaita* (March –April) for short distances.[12] But though this was the rule, there were exceptions. In case the conquering monarch found it advantageous to lead an expedition irrespective of the season, then he should do so.[13] But it is the prescription of the *Arthashastra*, corroborated by the *Kamandakiya* and the *Agnipurana*, that during the hot season only asses, camels, and horses were to be used,[14] in preference to elephants. The dewy season alone was fit for the use of elephants in marching. But a wise king is asked to avoid battle during the summer and rainy seasons.

The miscalculation about the season of March could weak adventurous design altogether. In the year 1013 A.D. a veteran general of the calibre of *Mahmud* of *Ghazna* had to cut a sorry figure on account of embarking upon the conquest of find at a wrong time of the year. The

snow fell while he was still at the Indian frontiers, "In so much that the passes of the hill were concealed and the right could not be distinguished from the left or what was behind from that which was before". The sultan and his troops remained trapped till the spring.[15] In the year 1193 AD When *Qutub- ud-din* marched on Ajmer in the blazing summer, "the armour on the bodies of the valiant was inflamed by the heat of the sun, and the sword in the scabbard related like wax". He changed his plan of day march to that of the night march.[16]

It appears that the most suitable time to set out was early hours of the morning after midnight. In an operation 'advance to contact' the major distances could be covered in the cool of night and early hours of the day. In attack, the cover of darkness concealed movements which helped in affecting surprise. It happened in the battle of *Tarain*[17] (1192 AD). *Harsha* commenced his conquest of the quarters "at the close of the third watch"[18] *Sultan Mahmud* ordered his drums to be sounded for the march toward *Kannauj* at midnight "and the friends of the God mounted their horses . . . and they marched on until the sun began to decline from the meridian."[19]

Consultation with Astrologers

When an expedition was decided upon, astrologers were consulted, especially in the later centuries of to ascertain the luckiest moment for the

formal departure of the army. With his intensely practical outlook, *Kautilya* was opposed to his reliance on the guidance of stars. "Wealth" he says, "will pass away from that childish man who enquires most after the stars" But his advice fell on deaf ears. The few accounts of ancient marches that have come down to us, whether legendary or historical, prove that rulers frequently consulted astrologers to this fact even in the Mahabharata. "That king", says *Bhishma* in the *Shantiparva* (100, 26), "Who sets out under a proper constellation and an auspicious lunation, always succeeds in winning victory." *Bana* informs us that king *Harsha* consulted "a troop of astronomers numbering hundreds" on the eve of his *dig-vijaya* campaign. The astrologers "fixed an hour of marching suitable for the subjugation of all the quarters".[20] It is mentioned in the *chach-nama* that when Rai chach prepared a grand army for an expedition "to the boundary of Hindustan which adjoined the kingdom of the Turk," he consulted a number of astrologers. "The astrologers fixed an auspicious time, at which he departed."[21] *Chach* followed the same procedure an the eve of an expedition against Armabel.[22] To the last the *naimitrakas* or astrologers formed an important feature of Hindu life.[23] It is noteworthy that in contrast with Kautilya, later writers on *niti* and *Arthashastra* have devoted long chapters of their works to a discussion of omina and portenta.[24] These prove beyond doubt the tremendous hold of these ideas on the public mind.

Apart from this consultation with astrologers the king was also expected to perform certain propitiatory rites and ceremonies on the eve of an expedition.

"The day before the battle", says *Kautilya*, "the king should fast and lie down in his chariot with weapons. He should also make oblations into the fire, pronouncing the mantras of the '*Atharva-Veda* and cause prayers to be offered[25] for the good of the victors as well as of those who attain to heaven by dying in the battle-field. He should also submit his person to the Brahmanas[26] Likewise, *Kamandaka* (XIX, 2) maintains that, the king should worship "the Gods and the twice born *Brahmanas*" on the eve of an expedition.

The devoutness with which king *Harsha* of Kannauj embarked on his *dig-vijasya* campaign is thus described by *Bana*. "The king had bathed in golden and silver vessels. . . had with devotion offered worship to the adorable *Nilalohita*, fed the up-flaming fire… bestowed upon *Brahmanas* seasamum vessels of precious stones, silver and gold in thousands, myriads also of cows having hoofs and horn tips adorned with creepers of gold-work; sat upon a throne with a coverlet of tiger-skins, duly anointed first his bow and then his body down to the feet with sandal bright as his own fame: put on two seemly robes of bark silk marked with pairs of flamingoes; formed about his head a carpet of white flowers. . . and

wound upon his forearm together with the seal-bracelet an amulet to prosper his going. After being sprinkled on the head with a spray of lustrous water scattered by the hand of the highly honoured and delighted *Purohit*, he had sent away valuable equipages, and divided among the kings ornaments anointing the heaven with a copious light of jewels, had loosed the prisoners, and bestowed suitable gifts of favour upon distressed pilgrims and nobles. . . Finally upon all good omens pressing forward officiously, like devoted servants, in the van amid a clamorous cry of "victory" from the delighted people, he issued forth from his house. . .[27]

Order of March

We can glean a few details regarding the order of march from the manuals of Kautilya and *Kamandaka* according to the former for instance, the march was to be conducted as follows: In the fore front and a little ahead of the main army was posted the director of labour (*prashasta*) with his retinue of artificers and workman, preparing the path for those coming behind. So the march was undertaken only after the road had been examined and cleared of thorns and shrubs: this process can be compared to present day army's "road-opening process" or ROP in which a small petrol-party of the army, comprises one or more officers (mostly newly passed out) some JCOs (Junior commissioned officers) and Jawans

(sepoys) goes out in advance of the march of the army and searched out for IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devises) and ambushes which the terrorists lay in against the army, involved in CIOPs (Counter-Insurgency Operations) to disturb the advance of the marching army.

The commander (*nayaka*) was to proceed in the van of the army. The king with his *harem* was to be stationed in the centre. On his two sides were to be posted his body-guard and horses. The elephants were to proceed in the rear and the baggage and provisions on all sides.[28]

The description of the order of march in the *Kamandakiya* is substantially the same, but there a few minor differences. "The *nayaka*", says *Kamandaka*, "should proceed in front accompanied by the picked men of the host. The king should be stationed in the centre along with the harem, the treasure chests as well as the weaker troops. The flanks of the army should be occupied by the horsemen, while the car warriors should be placed beside them on both sides. The elephantry should march beside the Carmen and beyond the elephantry should be placed troops recruited from forest tribes. The commander-in-chief should proceed in the rear of the army, encouraging the weak and worn-out troops.[29]

Conditions then were quite different from what they are today. Even on the march the army went arranged in battle order. This was undoubtedly to meet a sudden attack. It might be that the enemy would

make a surprise attack on the route; and if the army marched with no order or in an irregular order, it would not be possible to face the enemy effectively. “When there is a threat of attack in front, it should form itself, into a crocodile array, and then proceed. If, on the other hand, the threat is in the rear, the army should march in a wagon-like array. When threatened on either side, it should proceed in a diamond like array. If, again, the danger is apprehended from all sides, it ought to form itself into a *‘Sarvatobhadra’* array. While going along a narrow pass through which only one man can pass at a time, it should proceed in a needle like array”. This is from *Kautilya* (BK.X, ch-2), but we have the same injections in *Manu* (VII, 187-8), in the *Kamandakiya* (XIX, 48-9), in the *Agnipurana* (242, 4-8) and *Sukraniti* (ch. IV, Sec., VII, VV, 265-6).[30]

An army on the march was accompanied by a host of women- “The cavalcade of the royal seraglio”. This included not only the king’s *harem*, and the wives and mistresses of the great nobles and feudatory chiefs but also a great retinue of courtesans.

Magha in his famous work *Shishupalvadha* (V, 27) has mentioned that, “As soon as the army reached the encampment”, the prostitutes pitched their tents, spread their beds, made themselves more attractive by putting on new robes and like old residents, with offering of water and betel leaf, began to receive strangers. The other common characteristics which most ancient writers seem to emphasize is that an army on the

march wore the spectacle of a gorgeous procession, with banners unfurled, standards displayed and music playing and the last common phenomena which no writer has omitted to mention, is the terrific noise and clouds of dust produced by a marching host.[31]

Enemy information was considered to be of vital tactical importance. Accordingly reconnaissance patrols were posted on vantage points overlooking defiles along the route of enemy advance. This was done to form estimate of enemy strength by knowing the quantity of food-stuffs, grass bedding, fire-pots, flags and weapons, carried by his troops. Adequate precautions were to be taken to conceal own movements from the enemy to frustrate his attempts at collecting similar information.[32] It was in accordance with these percepts that when *Sussala* (1112-20 A.D.) of Kashmir attacked Rajapuri (modern Rajauri), "Before him marched Tilaka, the commander-in-chief and the *Damara prithviraja* was entrusted with the guarding of the routes.[33] What could be a better plan of move and deception than the one adopted by Ala-ud-din in his surprise attack on the fort of Deogarh. Leaving Kara he spent his time hunting and took two months to reach Ailichpur. There he spread the rumour that he was an *Amir* of the king of Delhi, and that he had strained and severed his relations with his master. He made the people believe that he was on way to an assignment with Telangana king.

Leaving Ailichpur at the dead of the night he advanced swiftly towards Deogarh, surprised its king, defeated a small contingent at a distance of two miles from Deogarh, and laid siege to the fort which had a depleted force and inadequate supplies.[34] The consequence can be well imagined than described.

Path finding for the move of a force in the lands unknown to them appears to have been a difficult measure during the period of our study. To facilitate advance in the desired direction and towards the objective there were neither maps like those prepared by survey of Indian these days, nor any regular corps of navigators. The services of the local inhabitants were requisitioned from bound to bound. For example, when *Harshavardhan* was returning to the capital from Punjab after receiving the news of his father's illness we read of "footman being sent ahead to secure a relay of villagers to show the way to *Harsha*"[35] Similarly when the Gujrat Army advanced towards Malwa, under Siddharaja, the services of Asaraja, a Bhil chief, were of immense value in that hilly country.[36]

We may add here that the advance reconnaissance parties dispatched for preparing roads and to laying bridges as described in the Ramayana are not referred to by the chronicles of our period. Such parties included men, who were fully conversant with the soil, who were "brave delvers, architects and experts in the construction of canals and water

courses. By their organized work trees were set up where there were none before, high grounds were leveled; hollows filled up; rocks cut through; bridges thrown over watery expanses.[37]

Discipline and the orderliness were fragile when the army was on the march. Banabhatta provides us a glimpse of the Harshavardhana's army like that, "Elephant keepers assaulted with clods by people starting from hovels which had been crushed by the animal's feet, called the bystanders to witness the assaults, watched families fled from grass cabins ruined by collisions. Despairing merchants saw the oxen bearing their wealth free before the onset of tumult[38] we will not be far from the truth to assume that the army on the truth to assume that the army on the march was disorderly mass, the only precaution observed being perhaps to keep the king and his *harem* in the centre."[39] It "wore the spectacle of a gorgeous procession, with banners unfurled standards displayed and music playing"[40] The local residents of the town and the villages thronged the routes to address complaints to the king,[41] and witness the cavalcade"[42] "...many a flower scattered and the women sprinkled '*akshata*' (rice) on the Raja till it seemed to strew the ground... other women brought flowers, fruits and coconuts, sandal, curds, *dooba* grass... there was not a lady in all the city who was dressed in scarlet, and glittering with ornaments and her person anointed, lest any bad lady should appear."[43]

Site for the Battle-field

One very important strategic consideration which engaged the general's mind was the choice of a proper site for the operations of war and this deployment of troops is the first step towards the complex process of battle. Arraying of troops for the action is not haphazard affair but involves rational consideration of various factors. It is thus laid down in the *Shivavyasadhanurveda*[44] : "That battle field which is damp, hard, full of gravel and water and contains granite and shrubs ought not to be chosen. But one without inundations but expansive, covered with a little dust or an uninhabited plain, is the best threatre of war." According to *Agnipurana,*[45] again, strategic warfare must be conducted in forests, on rivers and on rainy days, for attacks on open grounds are always difficult.[46]

In other context, however, *Kautilya* says "That part of the country in which his army finds a convenient place is the best: that part of the country which is of the reverse nature is the worst and that which partakes of both the characteristics is a country of middling quality. In other words, the amount of advantage which a position offered to the belligerent was to be the sole criterion of its merit or demerit. A general in command must have the military insight to recognize whether a particular position would be advantageous for the evolution and manoeurve of his troops.

Thus, the ancient military opinion appears to have attacked great importance to the position of an army in the threatre or war. A pre-*Kautilyan* teacher stresses the importance of position by means of the following homely analogy: "A dog seated in a convenient place may drag a crocodile, and a crocodile seated in a low ground can drag a dog"[47] In the *Arthashastra* (Bk. X, Ch. 4). Kautilya says; favourable positions for infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants are desirable both for war and camp.

According to Kautilya the primary consideration which should weigh with a general in selecting a position must be the character and composition of his forces. It was universally recognized that the different arms required different grounds for the proper discharges of their functions.[48]

A commander was expected to keep this fact persistently in view, and dispose troops in harmony with the grounds on which they were to act.[49]

River-Crossing

The river banks were generally preferred as natural sites for taking-up defenses. But it is to be remembered that the defensibility of the river is dependent upon its depth, width, general lie of the land where the crossing is intended, speed of the current, season of the year determining

the water level, the speed of current and the condition of the ground around the near as well as the far bank. The location of the crossing of major rivers say, its distance from the sea-shore was another factor of major consequence.

This is called the 'opposed river crossing' it denotes, negotiation of the river whose crossing is being contested actively by the opposing force. In all such of operations, the attacker had to establish a bridge head (place where the landing on far-bank takes place) in the face of fierce enemy opposition. Since the initiative lay with the attackers, he could deceive his opponent by feigning crossing at one place and accomplishing it at a point and time far removed from the original.[50] Hence, deception and mobility were attacker's strongest allies. Amongst the various contrivances for river crossing were elephants, bridges, temporary bridges (made with the help of erecting pillars and planks placed over those), boats, rafts, big baskets covered with skins and so on.[51]

As far as crossing of river by forming a living bridge of elephants is concerned, it was more in theory than in practice. Although, it was enunciated by *Kautilya* and has been spoken of by the modern writers like A.L. Basham.[52] and V.R.R. Dikshitar,[53] we have come across no evidence of the said practice in chronicles of our period.

The simplest technical manoeuvre for opposed river crossing was to negotiate the river at a place other than the one defended by the

enemy.[54] In 1006 AD Sultan *Mahmud* of *Ghazna* was doing nothing else but following this dictum in letter and spirit. After finding the crossing of the Indus contested by the forces of Abu-Futuh, he requested Anangpala to allow passage of his forces through his territories.[55]

According to *Jomini*, the most effective method of preventing the river-crossing by the enemy is to detail mobile troops to guard the course of the river over a wide area without making an effort to defend it at every place, and "concentrate rapidly at the threatened point in order to overwhelm the enemy while only part of his army shall have passed."[56] we may close the discussion by adding than such a simple yet effective concept of war, does not appear to have been perfected in India during our period.

TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In tactics we call a battle defensive if the enemy takes the initiative, and defender awaits him from his own station. Among the six prescriptions of foreign relations we can roughly speak of *Vigraha* as a war of offence and *asana* as one of defence. In the great battle of Lanka it was Lord Rama who took the offensive, while Ravana adopted a defensive policy.

In dealing with the conduct of war from the point of view of tactics the range and the effect of different weapons are important. In tactics,

however, we are concerned with arms in a finished state and not with their construction. At the outset it must be remarked that Indian literature is replete with a number of mystical weapons, which seem to have been used by the *Daiva* and *Asura* form of combat. They were chiefly fought with charms and spells. The *Atharvavedasamhita* is full of these. The object was to confuse the enemy and steal a march over him. It is not to our purpose to mention these, as we are dealing with the *manusha* form of battle, far from the realm of mythology.

Siege Operations

One kind of land fight was siege warfare since the ancient times; the king attached very great importance to fortresses for they served as the main base to defend the kingdom against the invasions of the enemy....

How the siege operations were conducted and what devices and tactics were adopted to get possessions of the enemy's fortresses may next engage our attention. Five methods seem to have been employed in capturing a fort.[57] They were intrigue, *apasarpan* or pretending to retreat, *vamanam* or winning over the people, *paryuvasanam* or actual siege, and *avamartha* or taking by assault. In *Kautilya*'s opinion, an invading king should not, all at once, commence the siege of the enemy's fortress, for such a procedure would ultimately land him in trouble. So a regular siege

must be preceded by a considerable reduction of the enemy's forces. This alone would easily lead him to victory in the struggle.

Employing means, whether fair or foul, the would-be conqueror should prepare the way for a well-laid siege. A messenger should speak highly of his omniscient and supernatural powers and of his close association with several deities, and thus evoke a sort of awe and reverence in the enemy toward him. Again heretics and jugglers may be specially employed to seduce the enemy's subjects from their loyalty to their lord by playing upon their humour through the display of various kinds of magical tricks. Or again, officials in the employ of the invader should pretend to have been dismissed by their master and seen employment with the defending sovereign. And after they gained his confidence they were to aim at his life. Further, he would be conqueror, to ensure eventual success, should win over guilds of merchants and other public corporation, and thus weaken the enemy. These and other methods prescribed by *Kautilya* may appear to laymen as unscrupulous, but they could be justified on the ground that his work in a treatise of expediency, and therefore these various means recommended for winning over the enemy's subjects or reducing his strength have indeed an ethical character, for it is the *svadharma* of a *Kshatriya* king to conquer the enemy though it might cost his life.

With such preliminaries the invader might begin the siege if he found that everything else was in his favour and not in his enemy's.[58] The opportune moment to commence siege operations might be when the enemy was in distress or suffered from disease, when his officers were disloyal and given to bribery, or when he possessed inadequate or ill-equipped defenses or had no ally to support him. The invader for such opportunity, and when it presented itself should not let it go for there is only one tide in the affairs of men. Again if the invader could not affect his purpose satisfactorily and found the enemy's people and officers above corruption or bribery, then he must have recourse to other and more effective means. Particularly when the enemy's subjects assumed the offensive, the invader might destroy their crops, water resources and stores, cut off their communications and place all kinds of obstructions in their path this is only the *pratikriya* of Indian political literature. It is not, therefore, considered a sin. For instance Lord *Hanuman* burnt down the whole city as his tail was set fire to. Thus by destroying their crops and depriving them of their cattle, an invading king prepared the ground for laying a siege to the enemy's fort.

During the actual operations of a siege, the ditch surrounding the ramparts of a fort if empty, should first by filled by besiegers with water and with mud and sand if it contained water. Then reaching the outer

walls of the parapet, and finding them strongly guarded with well-equipped warriors. Machines explosives and other materials might be used to bring down the walls by assault.

In the meantime, the cavalry troops would be employed in forcing a passage through the various gateways of the fortifications. If these endeavours should not bear fruit, than recourse might be had to be use of fire this was the last alternative, for Kautilya himself says that it is immoral and should be used only in an extreme crisis. Arrows vomiting fire could be shot both at the defenders of the fortress and into its interior. But this would not be sufficient to set fire to whole of the fortress inside. So it is suggested that the tails of birds could be tied with *agniyoga* which, when deposited on the roofs of the houses, would ignite and reduce the whole building to ashes.[59] In a fragment of Megasthenes, mention is made also of a kind of boiling oil used in warfare and especially in sieges. It was extracted for the king, according to *Ktesias*, from a work found in the Indus. The oil had the power to ignite everything. What exactly the worm referred to is has not been finally settled, though Professor Wilson identified it with the alligator.

If, despite such methods,[60] the enemy would still not submit, and offer a defensive attack and there was no chance of bringing down the fortress, other methods were recommended as a last resort. One such

method is to befriend the enemy, observe carefully his weak points, and suddenly strike him, of his citadel. If this should fail, the invader may feign defeat and exhaustion, and setting fire to his own camp, pretend to retreat, and thus induce the enemy to open his gates and come out. He should then turn back and take the fortress by storm without losing a single moment.

Another factor to be reckoned with was the use of elephants in siege warfare.[61] That these animals were used for demolishing the fort-walls is seen, beside other evidences, from the first fragment of the Indika of Ktesias. These animals were particularly trained for this purpose. At a given signal from their leader these animals rushed impetuously towards the walls and pressed themselves against them.

According to the *Agnipurana* the invading monarch should carefully note that part of the citadel over which the crows came in and went out, and concentrate his attack on that quarter.[62] If this were done, it was believed that the fort would be captured in the end. Before starting on a military expedition, Kalidasa says that the king should see that the capital fortresses as well as the frontier fortifications were well strengthened and defended.[63] For the value of a fortress to the king is incalculable. Only after such precautions had been taken did Raghu set out on his famous *digvijaya.*

Fear of foreign invasion is not the sole motive that necessitates the construction of these huge forts. Does not the lion, the king of animals, and a fierce destroyer of the gigantic elephant; has its abode in the mountain caves? So also there are advantages in a fortified palace.

Having thus captured the enemy's fortress, the invader should show mercy to the weak and the wounded. He must remove all his enemy's soldiers and warriors and replace them with his own men, lest the former should do any mischief. Then he should make a triumphal entry into the place with all the paraphernalia of a victor. After the fall of the citadel Lanka, *Ram* with his hosts spent the night in the city adorned with his garland of victory. He generously granted the kingdom to Vibhishana, the brother of the slain king.

Let us conclude this section by referring to the attitude of modern military experts towards the use of fortifications. Most of them take the view that as conditions exist as present, fortresses are unnecessary and dangerous. The men garrisoning them might be better employed in other places. Both the country and the army are either ruined by them or draw from them no tangible benefit. They entail enormous and wasteful expenditure for their building, maintenance, and garrisoning with troops. In fine, fortresses are seldom anything but an incubus. These remarks of a weighty authority must be respected, though we see a tinge of exaggeration in them. There is a wrong notion that is still current,

namely, that these forts have lost their military value and are an anachronism since the invention of gun-power.[64] But Dr. Oppert and some other scholars have demonstrated that gun-powder was in use in ancient India even in very early times, and still those strongholds were recommended as safe ones.

No doubt they were costly defences and some of the soldiers mobilized in the forts could have played a useful part in the open field. But there is the other side of the shield. It was during the last Great War, as we all know, that the fortresses in Belgium offered a stubborn resistance to the Germans, but for which the latter might in all probability have overwhelmed the whole of France. In fact they were decisive in arresting the progress of Germany. Therefore to decry the value of a fort is to misjudge its merit. It was perhaps rightly said that the "fortifications of Paris assure more powerfully the independence of France against the attacks of all Europe than the acquisition of many provinces which would only so much the more extend the frontier." It may be that the extensive use of gunpowder in recent times has facilitated their destruction much more quickly than before. But this is not a sufficient argument for condemning such a useful institution which has rendered glorious service through the ages. Even the use of heavy guns and shells has not thrown the dug-out trench out of its usefulness. Trench warfare is but one kind of

defensive operation from the security of the fortified and protected underground trench.[64a]

Ambuscade or an ambush, according to the chambers 20th century dictionary is "a lying in wait to attach by surprise" to inflict serious damage of life as and property upon the enemy through surprise, the ambush would require to be conducted with secrecy, alacrity and with an offensive sprit.

It was in the context of operation opposed river crossing that the term 'ambush' was used. The invader was to cross the river at a place other than the one defended by the enemy and was to entangle him in an ambuscade (*Sattra*)[65]

The very nature of this operation suggests that to be a successful, the ambush has to have an element of surprise. Springing of an ambush required careful selection of the area. The selected site was to conceal all in and out movements of the troops from the enemy and from the local population. The place selected was to be such as would first enable the successful entrapment of the enemy and later execution of their maximum number.

Therefore, the most suitable areas for this operation of war were mountains,[66] defiles, velleys,[67] forests and marshy lands[68] where the ground did not provide adequate cover for the concealment to troops, the

darkness of night and misty weather could be of great help.[69] During the reign of Didda (980/1-1003 A.D.) of Kashmir her forces were ambushed and annihilated in a certain defile near *Rajapuri* (modern Rajauri)[70]

For the success of an ambush one had to be aware of what is termed as enemy habits the usual strength and composition of enemy party, their mode and time of travel, formation of move, weapons carried & so on. The ambushing party was expected to lie-in wait for a considerable time. It therefore caused for a detailment of relieving parties and a very high standard of discipline to prevent disclosure through noise and movement.[71]

Fakhr-i-mudbbir was trying to accumulate experiences of the age in his work when he wrote that the site for an ambush should be away from inhabited area and preferably near some river, stream or in jungles for achieving easy concealment. Scouts should be posted on vantage points along the enemy routes to ingress to sound early warning.

Surprise and sudden attack, he felt was the key to springing a successful ambush where a large area is to be covered. The ambushing force should be divided into a number of units for the accomplishment of the task. When the attack is pressed home on one side, the troops on other sides should also open up. The ambush should turn out to be a tight noose of an executioner.[72]

'**D**efence' is also a very important strategy in the warfare it is an operational activity that took place while a force was compelled by the pursuing hosts to defend itself or when anticipating, enemy route and direction of advance, it deployed for defensive action.

The defensive deployment was also necessitated to enable troops to catch up breath, to replenish and to recognize their broken defences. Generally speaking, when an army anticipates on attack, it forms for fight at a point where it takes up defensive positions.[73] "An Army may often find it proper to await the enemy at a favourable point, strong by nature and selected before-hand for the purpose of there fighting a defensive battle."[74] The positions thus selected to fight the enemy, depending upon the aim, could be covered by defensive works wand entrenchments. It could be naturally strong and temporarily occupied by a force to gain some respite. The site could simply be an open one chosen to form up for a defensive battle.[75]

In the year 1010 A.D. when Mahmud of Ghazna advanced on Ghor, Mohomed of the Afghans, occupied an entrenched position, from which no fury of repeated attacks by the Ghaznavids could dislodge him.[76] As is well known, Mahmud himself dug in and sat behind the security of trenches at the battle of Peshawar.[77]

Since hills and mountains were ideally suited for taking up defensive positions, they were, naturally, preferred for this purpose. After

being defeated at the hands of Mahmud (1006 A.D.) *Bahira*, the ruler of Bhatia, went and set up defences at the top of mountain.[78] It may however, be remembered that the steepness and difficulty of access to a place, does not necessarily render it most suitable for fighting a defensive battle. It may at best be alright for a temporary camp. In the aforesaid battle for Bhatia, the resort to a hill top could not save *Bahira* from the hands of destruction. "To be really strong a position of this kind must not only be steep and difficult of access, but should be adapted to the purpose for which it was occupied, should offer as many advantages as possible for the kind of troops forming the principal strength of the army, and finally, should have obstacles more disadvantageous for the enemy than for the assailed."[79]

The place selected for taking up defences has to be such as would make it easier for the defender to fall upon the assailant at an opportune moment. It offers most unfavourable approach to the enemy up to the line of battle. It should provide cover and concealment for the move of troops for concentration; and provide a good observation over enemy movements. It should keep the route of withdrawal open and protect the flanks adequately "by either natural or artificial obstacles, so as to render impossible an attack upon their extremities and thus oblige the enemy to attack the centre or at least some point of the front."[80]

We have on record elaborate defensive deployments. When in 1011-12 AD. Mahmud of Ghazna set out to reduce Thaneshwar, famous for its idol *Chakraswamin*, the ruler of Dera advanced at the head of a powerful army to contest the crossing of the river Sutluj in the proximity of a place where the river enters the plains. The prince deployed is forces along the bank of the river with the hill protecting his rear and the elephants his front.[81] In the battle of Lamghan, the plan of battle suggested by Mahmud and approved by his father was to "seek a strong place in the mountains where they might make themselves secure, and from where they might make natural and unexpected assault upon the enemy."[82]

Further, one of the major plank on which success of defence as well as attack rested throughout the history of warfare was patrolling. The need and importance of patrolling does not appear to have been realized by the Hindu princes. At least, it is not on record. The Arabs and the Turks were, however, adept in this art.

The patrolling is obviously necessitated by tactical requirements of the force commanders to gain full knowledge about the enemy, his troops, plans and movements; and the need to protect own defences against sudden raids by the enemy. According to the Jomini, no general could plan a battle unless he knew what his adversary was upto.[83]

The enemy designs could be found out through a well organized agency of espionage, reconnaissance made by officers and light troops interrogation of prisoners-of-war and arrived at by discussion of hypotheses of probabilities.[84] The spies could be extremely useful during our period as the kings moved with quite a paraphernalia, ceremony and fanfare. Naturally the Indian princes must have made use of the system to gain information about the enemy but resort to reconnaissance to anticipate enemy tactics, seem to have been relied upon by the Muslims only. In chapter fourteen of his work Fakhr-i-Mudbbir gives comprehensive details of planning and conduct of reconnaissance in the field. The troops were to be detailed for patrolling tasks in rotation. Not only they were sent to gain enemy information but were also assigned tasks similar to the "Protective patrols" of the modern age. They were to be lightly equipped and were to ride chargers of the best breed. They were also advised to cover certain distances on foot. Their movements were to be concealed from the enemy. For this purpose they were to be careful not to kick dust while marching through sandy and dusty tracts. They were not to fight unless forced by sudden encounters with the enemy troops. While compelled to fight, they were to leave out one or two of their body like the modern left-out-of-battle (LOB) to skip out and on return to post the commander with up-to-date information about the skirmish. They were strictly advised against exaggerations of reports

about the enemy strength and move or own act of valour. They were not to oppress local population and had strict orders to pay for whatever they procured from the locals. They were not risk themselves unnecesaarily.[85] The detailed rules of patrolling also speak of the prototype of the modern long Range Patrols which are required to be out to gain enemy information for a number of days at a time.

The Battle Formations

The Sanskrit term which stood for battle-order, array and formation was *vyuha.*[86]

To begin with the battle-arrays seem to have been simple and consisted of only *paksau* (wings), *urasyam* (vanguard) and *pratigraha* (rear-guard).[87] With the passage of time battle arrays came to acquire-seven fold dimension viz., wings, flanks, vanguard, centre *(madhya),* rear-centre *(prastha)* and *koti.*[88] Somesvara[89] improved upon the system of deployment and made it nine-fold viz., *mukham, uras, praurasyam, pratigraha, kaksau, prakaksau, paksau, prapaksau* and *prasthana.*

The *VaddhakiSukara-Jataka* propounds only three broad classifications of deployment for battle viz., the lotus array, the waggon array and wheel array. 'Waggon' was a 'Wedge-shaped phalanx.' The lotus is 'equally extended on all sides and perfectly circular, the centre being occupied by the King.' The 'Wheel' is self explanatory.[90] Battle-

arrays have been classified in several broad categories viz., *Staff-like arrays, Snake-like array, Circle like array* and *Detached order.*[91] Each type of array has been explained in the succeeding paragraphs.

Staff-like Array *(danda vyuha)*

It is that battle-formation in which bodies of troops are deployed in equal strength on the front, wings and flanks. It had numerous varieties viz., when its arms protruded in front it was called *pradara* (breaking the enemy's array). When its flanks and wings were stretched backwards, it was known as *drdhaka* (firm); *asahya* (irresistible) when its wings were lengthened; *Eagle-like* array when the front bulged out. When these four varieties of battle orders were arranged in the reverse order they came to be known as a *'bow'* the *centre of a bow,* 'a hold' and a 'strong-hold.' The staff-like array whose wings are deployed like a bow was called *Sanjaya* (victory). The same with projected front is called *Vijaya* (conqueror); that which has its flanks and wings formed like a staff is called *sthulakarna* (big ear); the same with its front made twice as strong as the conqueror, is called *Visalavijaya* (vast victory); that which has its wings stretched forward is called *chamumukha* (face of the army); and the same is called *Jhasasya* (face of the fish) when it is arrayed in the reverse form."[92] *Pin-like* array was that, wherein one division or constituent of the army was made to deploy behind the other. It became *Valaya* (aggregate) and

Invincible-array when this pin-like array consisted of two or four lines respectively.[93]

Snake-like Array[94]

Generally speaking, *bhoga* or snake-like array was that in which the army was deployed in a line by which one might follow the other. One of its varieties was i.e., *sarpasari* (serpentine movement) or *gomutrika* (the course of Cow's urine), in which the wings, flanks, and front were of unequal depth. When the *sarpasari* consisted of two lines in front and its wings were arranged like one in staff-like array, it was called *Cart-like array*. The effectiveness of this battle-array is vividly explained in the *Vaddaki-Sukara Jataka* as well as the *Taccha-Sukara Jataka.* Dhanuggahatissa discussed the deployment of troops with elder Datta and suggested that it was the only means of capturing Ajatasattu: "Let him (the king desirous of capturing Ajatasattu) post valiant men on his two flanks on the hill top; and then show his main battle in front: Once he gets in between, out with a shout and a leap and they have him like a fish in a lobster-pot."[95] The cart-like array came to be known as Crocodile-array when reversed. When the cart-like array was formed of elephants, horses and chariots, it was termed as *Varipatantaka* array.

Circle-like Array *(Mandala)*

When the army was deployed in such a way that it was ready to face attacks from any side, it was supposed to have been formed in *circle-*

like array. It was called *Sarvatomukha* (facing all directions) when all distinctions between the wings; front and flanks were lost. Its other varieties were *sarvatobhadra* (all auspicious), *astanika* (one of eight divisions) or *vijaya* (victory).

Arrays in Detached Order

In these arrays the wings, flanks and front were deployed away from each other. Depending upon the number of divisions so deployed, it was called *vajra* or diamond and *godha* or alligator when it had five divisions. When it had four divisions, it was called *uaydnaka* (part) or *kakapadi* (crow's foot). When only three divisions were being deployed, it was termed as *ardhachandrika* (half-moon), *karkatakasringi.*

Although no details of vyuhas are available, they have frequently found mention in the contemporary chronicles of the period. "The lord *(Prithviraja)* arranged his army in the form of a crescent *(chandravyuha).*[96] According to another version, Rawal Ji, a general of Prithviraja deployed his forces in a 'vulture like array' *(Gridha Vyuha)*. In this scheme Balibhadra Kachchawaha was posted along with his troops on one wing, on the other wing was Jayaraja Yadav; Pavas Pundir's forces formed the neck and beak of the bird which was right opposite the enemy's front; the torso and the feet were formed by Samarkesari; at the tail was Maru. Prithviraja was himself somewhere on the left wing of the *Vyuha* before the commencement of the fateful action.[97]

Hemacharya mentions that "the army of Mularaja was drawn up in the form of a *chakravyuha* and *garudavyuha*.[98] In Visaldev Chauhan's fight against Baluk Rao Chalukya, when the two contending armies fought fiercely, the *"chakravyuha* was broken in one place."[99] Jayasimha (1129-49 AD) is reported to be expert in deploying troops for battle; Kalhana felt that he could have won the day against Kosthesvara without even striking a blow.[100]

Examining the evidence at hand, we may assume that the fad for making elaborate deployment of troops for battle-orders continued throughout our period. However, the process and procedure of deployment became very cumbersome with the increase in the number of the armies.

As against this elaborate and tedious method of forming battle-arrays, the Muslims had plans which were simpler conceptually and effective in implementation. Their plans were too simple to attract any applause from their Indian contemporaries who derisively termed them as having been formed without "much observation of rules."[101] The Muslim army adopted the fivefold division-the *Khamis* (five) consisting of the centre, two wings, vanguard and the rear-guard. The wings were covered by the cavalry but the tribal identity of the constituent forces was always preserved in all divisions and subdivisions of the army. Each tribe

proudly held aloft its own standard, or distinctive piece of cloth tied to a lance. The honour of carrying the colours went to the bravest of the clan.[102]

It was said that "on two sides of the *qalb* or *muqaddama (vanguard)* were drawn up the *maisara* (left wing) and the *maimana* (right wing) while a picked body of troops formed the *khalf or* rear to be thrown in battle later and only as a tactical move or as a last resort."[103] There were lines within various parts/divisions/sectors of the army. The foot-archers were deployed in the front row followed by the line of troops carrying swords, and shields. The third row contained soldiers with additional arms like iron-shields and knives and the fourth row of the appointments bearing swords, shields and maces. Sufficient gaps were to be left between rows to cater for clear visibility and effective manoeuvrability. We have it on record that in the conquest of the Nardin, Sultan Mahmud disposed his army entrusting the command of the right-wing to Amir Nasr; left-wing to Arslanu-1 Jazib, vanguard was put under Abu-Abdu-lla Muhammad Bin Ibrahimu-t-Tai and the centre was being commanded by Altuntash.[104]

Deployment of Elephants

One-third of the best elephants along with similar number of horses and the foot soldiers were deployed on the front and remaining two-thirds

were posted to cover the flanks and the wings.[105] It is there (in the front) that we find the elephants on their fixed post throughout our period with utter disregard of the counter tactics developed by the Muslim invaders. It is this unfaltering faith in the conservative ideas that motivated Ferishta to record that the Hindus usually deployed their elephants in the front-rank followed by infantry, with the aim of smashing front rank of the enemy.[106] "If this succeeded, the victory was usually complete. If, however, the elephants were repulsed and became alarmed, they ran back furiously on their own troops, causing that confusion among them which it was intended they should affect on their foes."[107] Mahmud who had seen it happening, deployed his elephants against Ilak Khan so as to form part of his line. This had an obvious advantage i.e., "if they alarmed and fled, they might have room to do so; while the space they occupied was instantly filled by other troops, which deployed right and left from the rear of each division."[108] Accordingly, Mahmud's elephantry frustrated the ferocity of the Tartar charge unaccustomed to these huge and frightening beasts. The elephants "at once pushed into the midst of the enemy, dispersing, over-throwing and trampling underfoot whatever was opposed to them; it is said that Mahmud's own elephants caught up the standard bearer of Ilak Khan and tossed him aloft with his trunk, in sight of the Tartar King and his terrified fellow-soldiers."[109]

Another safe method, to deploy elephants, was their placement in the rear of the battle formation, ready to advance and crush when required.[110]

Attack

We have noted that the Indians employed much ingenuity in ordering complicated deployment of troops on positions naturally suited for the purpose. However, they took no note of the counter techniques of attack on such well-defended sectors which came to be deployed by their adversaries. One such technique was : "when the enemy has come down from its favourable position following the false impression of the invader's defeat, the invader may turn back and strike the enemy's army, broken or unbroken"[111] The Turks of $7^{th}/8^{th}$ century were adept in this technique and the Byzantine commanders had to beware of them against the use of this ruse as "careless pursuit by cavalry was likely to be fatal, since in *Parthian* style the Turks like to rally from simulated flight and turn on disorderly pursuesrs."[112] We find this tactics being used by the Turks so effectively in our period of study. In 1010 A.D. when Mahmud failed to dislodge the Afghans inspite of repeated assaults. He feigned flight and simulated utter confusion. When the Afghans deceived by this stratagem left their entrenchments and commenced chasing the fleeing Ghaznawides. Mahmud wheeled about, attacked them and cut them to pieces.[113]

Again in 1197 AD when *Aibak*'s troops wavered in attacking the well entrenched *Rajput* positions at the foot of Mt. Abu., the natives misconstrued it as weakness of the enemy. They left their entrenchments to attack the Muslim with disastrous results.[114]

Time for the commencement of action

First light was considered to be the most suitable time for the commencement of the action. During the hours of darkness of the preceding night the approach march could be stealthy conducted right close to the forward enemy defences. Accordingly, it left the parties with major portion of the day for tactical manoeuvring. It saved the troops considerable amount of fatigue of traversing long distances during warmer hours and left them with sufficient time for forcing a decision during whole of the day. In this connection we may recall that during the second battle of *Tarain* (1192 AD) Muhammad *Ghori* was able to surprise *Rajputs* at early hours of the day by establishing a point of manoeuvre only a few miles short of main *Rajput* force after successfully traversing the intervening distance during the previous night.[115] Aibek too had fought the fierce action at Mount Abu "dawn to the mid day."[116]

However, Fakhr-i-Mudbir thought differently on the subject. He felt that it was not possible to fight throughout the day and as such be recommended that battle should be commenced in the afternoon.[117] The

objective points were usually the main targets of enemy force. The invaders in their major assault operated on simple lines of operation. The numerous records of the period reveal that the attack was normally commenced by heavy archery.[118]

In 1001AD when Jaipala was forced to commence action against impetuous Mahmud "the two armies advanced to attack, discharging clouds of arrows." Again, in the battle of *waihind* (1008-09AD), Mahmud having firmly dug in, ordered 6000 archers to the front, to commence action.[119]

Simultaneously with the work of the archers or at times quite independent of them, a powerful frontal attack was launched by the elephant corps and the cavalry.[120]

When the frontal elephants were assailed by the opponent forces with showers of arrows directed against their eyes and trunks.[121] It was under such circumstances that the commanders passed through acid test of their generalship, as it required an the battle experience and an astuteness of the first order to detect a weak spot in the line of the enemy and concentrate a powerful attack on that.[122] Singe penetration or forcing an enemy into the enemy's frontline is what is termed by *Shukra* as the establishment of a 'Post'[123] a synonym of modern 'bridge-head'. All out efforts had to be made to enlarge this post and from there the enemy's strength was to be broken in due course of time.

The Turkish tactic which was very successful against the Indian armies addicted to conventional warfare of their imaginary superiority was the controlled mobility over vast expanse of land. By this the Turks harassed and exhausted their adversaries without engaging in a close combat and launching a powerful attack by hurling the heavy cavalry at the opportune moment.[124] In his second invasion of Hind when pitted against *Jaipala*, *Subuktigin* divided his troops into batches of 500 each who took their turn to engage the Hindus constantly. When they were exhausted, different fighting groups of the Turks joined hands to make one powerful charge with obvious results.[125] We have another example of the use of this tactics. In the second battle of *Tarain* (1192 AD) Muhammad *Ghori* found that *Prithviraja,* "a slave to tradition"[126] had deployed his forces in a well-known battle order.

Against this after his morning surprise raid had failed to make any dents, he divided his army into five divisions. Four of these divisions were of mounted archers and had the orders to fight at random. Turning flanks, attempting envelopments but all the time avoiding hand to hand fights by feigning flights if pressed hard "These tactics were successfully employed from the morning until the afternoon, when Muhammad judging that the Hindus were sufficiently pressed and wearied, charged their centre with 12,000 of the flowers of his cavalry. When (Hindus)

were completely routed…."[127] It may however be pointed out that there was nothing very novel in this tactical concept. The *Arthashashtra* had preached it long ago. The enemy was to be tired out by fighting against deserters from its own ranks, allied armies and the wild tribes then struck with fresh troops.[128]

At this stage it may not be out of place to refer to a custom of dismounting for combat. It was prevalent amongst certain tribes inhabiting the border territories lying between Sindh and *Rajputana*. The practice highlighted the fact that he people of that area were not good cavaliers. According to the *Beg-Lar-Nama* on request from *Rana, Kumba Wairsi, Mir Kasim Beg Lar* governor of (Amarkot) marched at the head of *Sodhas* against the *Rathors.* When both the armies stood face to face, the *Rana* intimated to the Mir that it was an established custom amongst their tribes that both parties should alight from their horses and engage on foot. The most noble *Amir* agreed and gave orders accordingly. . ."[129]

In a battle between Mehrat and Chach, on being invited by the former to a duel, Chach represented that he was not used to fighting from the horse back being a Brahmin. Mehrat magnanimously conceded his requested and got down from his horse to meet him on equal terms. Thereupon, "Chach treacherously sprang upon his horse and slew his adversary before he could recover from the surprise."[130]

At times, however, the outcome of battle was decided by the individual combats between the leading knights. This was caused 'duel' or *Dwandayuddha*.[131] In a well sung duel between Arnoraja and Kumarapala the former was injured. "Arnoraja's individual defeat proved the defeat of his whole army; it precipitately left the field carrying away its unconscious leader"[132] The duels were quite popular during the period of our study. Visaldev Chauhan and Baluk Rao Chaulukya are recorded to have fought a terrible duel.[133] In the first battle of *Tarain* (1191 AD), "Govind Rai the (Governor of Delhi), who led the vanguard of his brother Prithviraj, on sighting Shihabuddin from a distance, drove his elephant toward him. The two leaders met in a single combat. The sultan's lance knocked out two of *Govind Rai*'s front teeth, while the Hindu chief hurled a javelin which inflicted a severe wound on the upper arm of Shihabuddin and forced him to turn his horse's head round in agony and weakness. . . . The rout of the Turk army was complete."[134]

The practice of fighting duels was not peculiar to Indian's alone. The Arabs also some time began their hostilities "with individual combats of distinguished champions, who stepped forward out of the ranks and delivered a challenge."[135] Fakhr-i-Mudbir lays down detailed guidelines, for fighting individual combats. When a warrior steps forwards to oppose him, he should begin the fight by the use of the arrows. He was advised to

use lance when the enemy came nearer, attack him with his sword at close quarters. The mace too could be of an immense value at such a juncture. The cavalier on the best charger was alone to pick up the gauntlet thrown by the enemy cavalier.[136]

Manoeuvres like 'Turning the flanks' and 'envelopments' were well known to in the history of Indian warfare. It was said that "when frontal attack is unfavourable, he (attacker) should strike it from behind; when attack on the rear is unfavourable, he should strike it in front; when attack on the side is unfavourable, he should strike it on the other".[137] It was in pursuance of these tactical prescriptions that in the first battle of *Tarain* Prithviraja IIIrd forces out-flanked those of Mohammed Ghori. Turning both of Ghori's flanks, his forces were enveloped completely by the *Rajputs*: "While shahab-ud-*din* was engaged in the centre of his army, he learnt that both of his wings had given away, and soon found himself surrounded."[138]

Muslims were fully conversant with this tactics. For example, it was an attack from the rear at the most crucial moment which won the day for Mahmud of Ghazni at the battle of *Waihind.* In the second battle of *Tarain,* we find Muhammad Ghori diligently posting troops to protect his rear against surprise attack from the *Rajputs,* The Shah (*Ghori*) arranged the rear-guard thus: he placed there thirty guardians. Alam

Khan, the pride of the world, Khan Ajbakk the exile and the little Maruf, the agent and khan Dustam the Bajrangi. . . [139]

The preference for launching flank attack over that for frontal one was governed by sound tactical considerations. It provided a narrow frontage of attack for an enemy who was less numerous than in the centre. The range of archery being very limited enfiladed-fire could not be brought down from the troops at a distance. Hence, it was the necessity to close from the flank. Pressure from the sides forced the troops to shrink towards the centre upsetting battle arrays, through squeezing process with consequent confusion and disorder. Above all, turning the flanks was a preclude to complete envelopment resulting in a loss of contact with the base and pivots of monoeuvres through rupture of the lines of communication.[140]

When the forces had been arranged in the battle-order and the contact made with the enemy, it was a time to employ intrigue and conduct treacherous fights.[141] That not only saved unnecessary blood-shed but also led to easy victory. When Kumarapala encamped outside the walls of Ajmer, Arnoraja came out to give him battle only when his secret agents has assured him that Chauliga, the elephant driver of Kumarapala had been bought and that the allegiance of Kalhana and a few more of Kumarapala's feudatories had been wrecked. Having thus

infested with arena with intrigue and treachery and having calculated a favourable circumstances, Arnoraja marched out and fell upon the enemy. "But as luck would have it, *Kumarapala*'s suspicions had been aroused and *Chauliga*, the ruler's elephant driver resigned almost on the eve of the battle", thus frustrating Arnoraja's design.[142]

The final assault and employment of reserves although it was tactical manoeuvring of troops which tremendously influenced the outcome of battles, yet ultimate decision was obtained not before the general charge had been launched. At this stage besides the personal valour of the rank and file the decisive factor was the seasoning and combat readiness of the troops. According to S.D. Singh when the general attack is launched, "A thick dust adds darkness to misery, but the battle rages unabated, the combatants guess and strike, guided by the watch words, names and tribal distinctions of the distinctions of the contending forces. Soldiers are pierced by javelins and cut asunder by axes, trodden by elephants and trampled by horse; the wounded moan and the parched throats cry out for water"[143] The ultimate victory was clinched by the commander who, could keep cool, in such a confused state of affairs and gain tactical advantage by skillfully deploying a body of chosen warriors, kept in reserve. It was said that, "Having detached the flower of the army and kept it on a favourable position not visible (to the enemy)" the rest of

the army should be arrayed.[144] The enemy was to be engaged with major portion of the army on the wings, flanks and front and he was to be captured with the keep of a reserve force. It was to be remembered that "without a reserve he (the king) should never attempt to fight"[145] We have seen that Mohammad Ghori did it successfully at the second battle of *Tarain*.[146]

Importance of Correct Deployment

At this stage we may also like to suggest that the arranging of troops in *Vyuh* as or battle-formation did have a marked influence on the actual conduct of final action. But for the correct deployment of troops by Prithviraja III in the second battle of *Tarain* Muhammad *Ghori* could have clinched the decision moment he caught the *Rajputs* unawares at very early hours of the morning.[147] On the other hand, careless deployment of troops in battle-order before the final assault could simply result in a disaster.[148]

Colligation in Fighting

The *Beg-Lar-Nama*, describes a curious custom of the 'people of Hind and Sind'. The Sammas, were known is to tie themselves in a single line before the final desperate charge with the help of their turbans fastened to their waists and in that position used to fight to the last man.[149]

Tarikh-i-Sind records not only the tieing of men with their waist bands but also of carrying shields together to form a compact phalanx.[150]

We may state that this may be an old custom prevalent amongst the barbarous tribes and as such was limited to the area and the people who were used to it. It does not seem to find mention in the works of well known ancient political writers, biographers or eminent literary figures of our period. Hence, it may be noted as a curious matter and not the one of historical fact of wide usage.

Night Attacks

Night operations both offensive and defensive were known in India right from the days of the epics. At dusk the infantry are recorded to have carried thousands of blazing torches to the field so that others could carry on the battle. The soldiers at times disengaged at sun set only to resume fighting with the rising of moon. The Ramayana monkeys kept charging the *rakshasa* even in the dark. However they did check on the opponent's identity before delivering their blows.[151] The deployment of elephants protected by leather or cotton armour seems to have been in vogue for nocturnal raids. Sentries were posted in rotation for the protection of night harbours.[152]

Night operations had obvious advantages. Surprise could be achieved easily. A small body of troops could assault unwary force bigger

in size, inflict heavy damage and quietly melt out to its base under the benign cover of darkness. The damage thus caused to the enemy depleted his resources and shattered his morale. Numerous night raids preceding the fateful dry of battle sapped the vitals of enemy resistance and bed to his easier capitulation. However, the non-existence of reliable aids to navigation and difficulties of command and control at night did not permit the exploitation of these advantages to any great extent. As such, operations at night were limited only to small scale raids during our period.

We have numerous examples to prove our contention. During his second term to king ship when Sussal (1112-20 AD) marched on Mallakostha at Lohara, his troops were greatly troubled by night raids and made "as miserable as dying people by terrible dreams."[153] The same was the plight of his troops when they besieged Garga near Dhudavana.[154] *Prithviraja* IIIrd had personally led an abortive night raid on Dharavarsa Parmara of Abu which has been described in the *Parthaparakrama-Vyayoga*.[155] In 1195 A.D. while at Ajmer Kutub-ud-din Aibek learnt that the Mhers were trying to seditiously incite the people of Nehrwala to join them in putting an end to his design by attacking him at night.[156] Fakhr-i-Mudbir, dilated at length on the techniques of launching night-raids. Raids on enemy camps should be carried out at a time between the

midnight and very early hours of the morning; the tents should be felled by cutting their ropes; the stables occupied while the raiders should keep shouting that so-and-so has been caught and so-and-so has been killed. The raiding party should quickly get away. Her further advised, that the camps should be well protected against night raids with the help of ditches, iron chains and distribution of troops according to a well laid out tactical plan.[157]

Retreat & Pursuit

Retreat is the most difficult operation of war. The mechanics of this operation can be understood provided we can visualize the physical and psychological conditions of the vanquished army in full retreat, difficulties of maintaining semblance of command and control, break-down of the organization and disastrous consequences thereof. “An army in retreat is always in a bad state either physically or morally because a retreat can only be the result of reserve or of numerical inferiority.”[158]

Volumes have since been written on this subject in the modern times and many theoretical details pertaining to this operation of war could be gleaned from these publications. However, the ‘retreats’ of our period were mostly a disorganized and confused affair.

The retreat of Hindus after the battle of *Waihind* (1008-09 A.D.) provides one such example. Almost eight thousand of the fleeing troops

were killed with no respite from their pursuers for two days and two nights.[159] Earlier, when fighting under Jaipal and defeated by Subuktigin, the vanquished army of the contemporary Indian ruler "fled leaving behind their property, utensils, arms, provisions, elephants and horses."[160]

It would be utterly wrong to suggest that the field commandant of our period could not plan and conduct retreats. Before the commencement of a battle rendezvous were fixed and made known to the soldiers. They were required to assemble these in case of a fall in the fortune. After the defeat of *Somnath* 4000 Hindus are reported to have rushed to their boats standing nearby and escaped, of course, not without much loss.[161] So was the case of the fleeing Turks after being routed in the first battle of *Tarain*. They retreated, assembled and retired to the base of operations.[162] i.e. Lahore,[163] Minhaj-us-Siraj provides us with an example which shows that at times the retreats were conducted in definite stages and decisive battles were fought even after being chased hotly over wide distances.[164]

Pursuit normally commences when the vanquished hordes start retreating. It "should generally be executed as boldly and actively as possible, especially when it is subsequent to a battle gained, because the demoralized army may be wholly dispersed if vigorously followed up."[165] While this was true in almost all cases when the forces of Indian kings were defeated at the hands of Turks, it was otherwise, in a reverse

situation. After the first battle of *Tarain* (1191 AD) "Prithviraja could have easily consummated this victory by chasing and annihilating his routed enemy; but instead of doing this, he allowed the scattered Muslim army to reform itself as some distance from the field and return almost unmolested"[166] But this was not to be the story of the very next year. The Muslim forces ran close at the heels of the *Rajputs* cutting them to pieces and reducing numerous strong forts like *Hansi*, *Sirsa*, *Samana* and *Kohram* in one go.[167]

The Turks, better generals as they were, planned this vital operation of war in minute details. They left nothing to chance which would help them to complete the ruin of their defeated foes. We know that Mahmud had planned to cut off the route of his enemy's withdrawal at *Somnath*.[168] When Muhammad *Ghori* in an attempt to reduce Khwarizm had delayed his lifting the siege till the allied army under kurra Beg and Oothman Khan Somarkandy had arrived right in front of him, he burnt his baggage and retreated to give battle, and was wholly defeated, losing all his elephants and treasure; while the confederate kings, who had taken a circuit to cut-off his retreat towards Ghazni intercepted him....[169]

It would be wrong for us to presume that the Indian princes were not aware of this tactical concept and its advantages. After the defeat in the battle of *Kalighatta*, *Khottiga Rashtrakuta* (971 AD) who retreated to

his capital was allowed no respite by his adversary *Parmara Siyaka* II who "pursued the Vanquished monarch and reached the gates of *Manyakheta*. Khottiga could not repel the invading forces of Malwa and surrendered his capital to their mercy."[170] The capital town was sacked by the victors. This incident would prove that the Hindu princes were certainly aware of tactical advantages that could accrue from the relentless pursuit of the defeated armies. The religious dictums of *Sashtra*s "which give the *Kshatriyas* their high notions of chivalry in the treatment of a fallen foe or fleeing foe,"[171] never stood in their way when they chose to be aggressive and bold. They made use of this dictum only when overcome by indolence and utter lack of prudence. For example when Harsha (1089-1101 A.D.) defeated Uccala, he did not pursue him although he new fully well that his foe was alive. Consequently, the Damaras unnerved by their reverse took fresh courage and collected their forces scattered after their defeat, and recommenced the struggle.[172]

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160. Ibid, p. 23.

161. Elphinstone, op. cit., p. 335.

162. Dashrath, op.cit, p. 83.

163. Elphinstone, loc. cit.

164. Tabakat-i-Nasiri, Elliot and Dowson, op. cit., Sushil Gupta, Calcutta, p. 34.

165. Hittle, op. cit., p. 127.

166. Dashrath, op. cit., p 84.

167. Dashrath Sharma, Rajasthan through the Ages: A Comprehensive and Authentic History of Rajasthan, (Bikaner: Rajasthan State Archives, 1966) p. 298.

168. CHI, III, p. 24.

169. Ferishta, op. cit., I, p. 102.

170. Ganguly, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

171. Dashrath, Early Chauhan Dynasties, p. 84.

172. H.C, op. cit., VII, 1340-41.

CHAPTER–VI
THE FAMOUS BATTLES

Although a number of battles were fought during this period, but only a few prominent among those have been discussed here.

The battle between Harsha and Pulakeshin II

The military activities of Harshavardhana of the Pushyabhuti dynasty have been distinguished into four phases by R C Majumdar,[1] namely his conflict with (i) the ruler of Valabhi, (ii) Chalukya Pulakeshin II, (iii) Sindhu, and (iv) countries in the east like Magadha, Gauda, Odra, and Kongoda. The details, or even the chronology, of these campaigns is not clear. Bana's narration of the events in the life of Harsha ends with his meeting Rajasri and his returning to his camp along the bank of the river Ganga, with his sister. The Chinese traveler Yuan Chuang refers to the military career of Harsha 'in a vague and general manner'.

R C Majumdar very aptly remarks: 'The war between Harsha and Pulakeshin has been regarded as a memorable event both by the successors of Pulakeshin and by modern historians. But such a degree of importance is not reflected in contemporary records.[2]

It is clear from the *Harshacharita* that Lata, Malava and Gurjara were on inimical terms with the Pushyabhutis even at the time of Harsha's father, Prabhakaravardhana.[3] The Gurjara epigraphs[4] proudly

claim that Dadda II of the Broach line of this dynasty 'obtained great glory by protecting (or rescuing) the lord of Valabhi who had been overpowered by the great lord, the illustrious Harshadeva'[5]. It would appear that after suffering reverses at the hands of Harsha, the king of Valabhi retrieved the situation with the help of the Gurjara Dadda II. The Aihole Inscription of Pulakeshin II makes it clear that Lata, Malava and Gurjara were feudatories of Puiakeshin II and had 'voluntarily accepted this position', most probably for protection against Harsha.[6] They acted as buffer states between the dominions of Harsha and Pulakeshin II had conflicting interests in central India. The former was *sakalottarapathesvara,* while the latter was *dakshinapathaprithivyah svami,* as told in the Chalukya records.[7] The hostile act of Dadda II, a feudatory of Pulakeshin II, against Harsha might have been the immediate cause of the Harsha Pulakeshin in II war.[8]

Yuan Chuang informs us that Harsha 'has gathered troops from the five Indies and summoned the best leaders from all countries, and himself gone at the head of his army to punish and subdue these people[9] but he has not yet conquered their troops.[10] This statement of the Chinese pilgrim would project Harsha in the role of the aggressor. The *Aihole* Inscription[11] states that Harsha 'was seized with fear when his elephant corps was routed in the battle.'[12]

Most of the scholars like V.A. Smith[13], R.K. Mookerji,[14] R.S.

Tripathi[15], K.A.N. Sastri[16], are of the opinion that Harsha suffered defeat at the hands of Pulakeshin II. But it seems more likely that the battle was perhaps undecided. B.N. Sharma is of the view that even the Chalukya eulogy (Aihole Inscription) does not categorically state that Harsha was defeated by Pulakeshin II. He refers to a local tradition of the Jabalpur region which shows that Harsha's war with Pulakeshin II was indecisive. Even Kielhorn felt that the narration of the conquests of Pulakeshin II was modeled on the *digvijaya* of Raghu.[19]

It is clear from the Aihole *Prasasti* that war-elephants formed part of Harsha's army in his battle against Pulakeshin II. The Banskhera[20] and Madhuban[21] grants, issued from the 'victory camps' at Sri Vardhamanakoti and Kapitthika respectively, refer to these military camps as abounding in 'boats, elephants, and horses' *(mahanauhastyasvajayaskandhavara).* There is no reference here to chariots which formed the fourth wing of the traditional four-fold *(chaturanga)* army since post-Vedic times. It is to be noted that war chariots 'fell into total disuse about the 7th century A.D.'[22] Interestingly, Yuan Chuang, while giving an account of Harsha's army,[23] refers to infantry, cavalry, elephant corps, and chariots. In view of the conspicuous absence of any reference to chariot wing in Harsha's army in the Pushyabhuti records and also in the *Harshacharita,* K.K. Thaplyal remorks, 'It appears that the account of the Chinese pilgrim is not

authentic. He merely seems to have enumerated the four-fold traditional wings of the army, not the actual ones as they then existed.[24] The boats were perhaps 'meant for riverine military transport and did not constitute a separate naval wing.[25]

Regarding the numerical strength of Harsha's army, Yuan Chauang says that at the start of his military career, he possessed an army of 5,000 elephants, 20,000 cavalry, and 50,000 foot soldiers, which he had increased to 1,00,000 cavalry and 60,000 elephants by the time he had subjugated a greater part of northern India.[26]

Interestingly, the Aihole *Prasasti*[27] refers to the elephants of Pulakeshin II in the vicinity of the river Narmada and the Vindhaya Mountains. If this was the scene of his battle with Harsha, these elephants might have participated in this conflict.). In a decisive battle fought on the banks of the river Narmada, Harsha lost a major part of his elephant force and had to retreat.

> *"Siladitya raja (i.e., Harsha), filled with confidence, himself marched at the head of his troops to contend with this prince (i.e., Pulakesi); but he was unable to prevail upon or subjugate him".*

Nothing else is known about the composition or numerical strength of the army of Pulakeshin II.

Mookerji[28] quotes R.D. Banerji as saying that the Aihole

Inscription testifies to the conquest of Kosala and Kalinga by Pulakeshin II, the regions which were also invaded by Harsha. Therefore the battle between Harsha and Pulakeshin II must have taken place in that vicinity. R.C. Majumdar feels that since the Latas, Malavas and Gurjaras had voluntarily acknowledged the suzerainty of Pulakeshin II, and since Bundelkhand is also referred to by Yuan Chauang as independent, the southern boundary of Harsha's empire must have been much further to the north of the Narmada, and the battle must have been fought there.[29]

V.A. Smith, however, felt that Pulakeshin II 'guarded the passes on the Narmada so effectually that Harsha was constrained to retire discomfited, and to accept that river as his frontier.[30] This view has been generally accepted by most of the scholars like K.A.N. Sastri[31] R.K. Mookerji,[32] and K.K. Thaplyal.[33]

The date of the battle between Harsha and Pulakeshin II is not certain. That it had taken place in or before AD 634 is clear from the fact that it finds mention in the Aihole Inscription of that year. The Lohner grant of AD 630 makes no mention of this battle. This would seem to show that the battle was fought sometime between the dates of the two records, i.e. AD 630 and AD 634. But K Chattopadhyaya[34] says that as no king defeated by Pulakeshin II is mentioned by name in the Lohner grant, nothing could be proved by the absence of Harsha's name in that record.

But JF Fleet places this event before AD 612, the date of the Hyderabad grant of Pulakeshin II. According to this record, Pulakeshin II acquired the title of *Parameshvara* by defeating 'hostile kings who applied themselves (or a hostile king who had applied himself) to the contest of a hundred battles.[35] The successors of Pulakeshin II claim in their inscriptions[36] that he assumed the title of *Parameshvara* after defeating Harsha. Fleet[37] feels that as the title of *Paramesvara* has been used for Pulakeshin in the Hyderabad grant of AD 612, he must have defeated Harsha before this date. But while D Devahuti[38] suggests that Pulakeshin II adopted this title after this victory over Appayika and Govinda, K.K. Thaplyal[39] feels that it was assumed after defeating Mangalesa. Had the information given in the epigraphs of the successors of Pulakeshin II been correct, and Pulakeshin II had adopted this title after defeating Harsha, this fact would have been mentioned in the Aihole Inscription.[40] R.S. Tripathi[41] suggests that Pulakeshin IInd assumed the title of *Parameshvara* after defeating several kings, but it became his *aparanama* or second name only after defeating Harsha. The successors of Pulakeshin II attached so "much importance to this event of his defeating the Pushyabhuti ruler, that they 'associated the assumption of this title with that event.'[42] That Harsha had not been defeated by Pulakeshin II before AD 612 is also shown by another fact. K. Chattopadhyaya[43] argues that up to that year Harsha had not become very

powerful and it was not deemed necessary to make specific mention of his defeat at the hands of Pulakeshin II. But it is difficult to believe if Harsha had been defeated before the date of the Hyderabad grant, this achievement of the Chalukya monarch would not find mention that grant. It has also been pointed out that if the ruler of Valabhi overpowered by Harsha and protected by Dadda II, was Dhruvasena II, and if this hostile act of Dadda II led to the battle between Harsha and Pulakeshin II, then the battle could not have been fought before AD 629, the date of the accession of Dhruvasena II[44]. Therefore, it seems best to place the event tentatively between AD 630 and AD 634.[45]

It cannot be said in any fairness that Harsha suffered any decisive defeat at the hands of Pulakeshin. The former invaded the latter's dominions, but was repulsed. It was more the failure of a military expedition. As R.C. Majumdar says, there is no doubt that the result of the battle was magnified in favour of Pulakeshin by his successors, and also by those modern historians who hold that the Chalukya king inflicted a crushing defeat on Harsha.[46]

BATTLE OF RAJASTHAN

The **Battle of Rajasthan** is a battle (or series of battles) where the Hindu Rajput clans defeated the Muslim Arab invaders in 738 CE. While all sources (Hindu and Muslim) agree on the broad outline of the conflict

and the result, there is no detailed information on the actual battle/s. There is also no indication of the exact places where these battles were fought—what is clear is that the final battle took place somewhere on the borders of modern Sindh-Rajasthan. Following their defeat the remnants of the Arab army fled to the other bank of the River Indus.

This is one reason to choose the title "Battle of Rajasthan" to describe that conflict. But a more important reason is the participation of the Rajput clans of Rajasthan: Gurjara Pratihara, Chauhans, and Guhilots, on the Hindu side. After their victory these clans established large states in North India, which marks the commencement of the Rajput period.

Background

With the break-up of the Gupta Empire (550 CE), northern India was covered with warring states, which attempted to wrest the imperial position left vacant by the Guptas. Among these were Yasodharman of Malwa, the Maitrakas of Vallabhi, and Harshvardhan of Thanesar. But a stable empire in the north was only established by the Gurjara Pratiharas of the Rajasthan-Gujarat-Malwa region by 750 CE, which lasted for over a century.

Before the onset of this age West Asia was conquered by the politico-religious ideology of Islam (7th Century). Under the Umayyad Caliphs the Muslim Arabs attempted to conquer the frontier kingdoms of

India; Kabul, Zabul, and Sindh, but were repulsed. In the early 8th Century the Kingdom of Sindh was convulsed by internal strife—taking advantage of the conditions the Arabs renewed their assaults and finally occupied it under Muhammad bin Qasim, the nephew of Al-Hajjaj (governor of Iraq and Khurasan). Qasim and his successors attempted to expand from Sindh into Punjab and other regions but were badly defeated by Lalitaditya of Kashmir and Yasovarman of Kannauj. Even their position in Sindh was still not fully stabilized at this time.[47]

Events leading up to the battle

Junaid, the successor of Qasim, finally subdued the Hindu resistance within Sindh. Taking advantage of the conditions in Western India, which at that time was covered with several small states, Junaid led a large army into the region in early 738 CE. Dividing this force into two he plundered several cities in southern Rajasthan, western Malwa, and Gujarat. The Arab chroniclers claim that he acquired immense wealth, slaughtered large numbers of infidels, and returned.

Indian inscriptions confirm this invasion but record the Arab success only against the smaller states in Gujarat. They also record the *defeat* of the Arabs at two places. The southern army moving south into Gujarat was repulsed at Navsari by the Solankis and Rashtrakutas. The army that went east, after sacking several places, reached Avanti whose

ruler Gurjara Pratihara Nagabhatta trounced the invaders and forced them to flee. After his victory Nagabhatta took advantage of the disturbed conditions to acquire control over the numerous small states up to the border of Sindh.[48]

The Battle

Junaid probably died from the wounds inflicted in the battle with the Gurjara Pratiharas. His successor Tamin organized a fresh army and attempted to avenge Junaid's defeat towards the close of the year 738 CE. But this time Nagabhatta Pratihara, with his Chauhan and Guhilot feudatories, met the Muslim army before it could leave the borders of Sindh. The battle resulted in the complete rout of the Arabs who fled broken into Sindh with the Rajput clans close behind them.

In the words of the Arab chronicler Suleiman, "*a place of refuge to which the Muslims might flee was not to be found*." The Arabs crossed over to the other side of the River Indus, abandoning all their lands to the victorious Hindus. The local chieftains took advantage of these conditions to re-establish their independence. Subsequently the Arabs constructed the city of Mansurah on the other side of the wide and deep Indus, which was safe from attack. This became their new capital in Sindh.

Thus began the reign of the Imperial Gurjara Pratiharas and the Rajput Period of Indian History.

Equipment and resources

In the Gwalior inscription it is recorded that Nagabhatta "*crushed the large army of the powerful Mlechcha king*." This large army consisted of cavalry, infantry, siege artillery, and probably a force of camels. Since Tamin was a new governor he had a force of Syrian cavalry from Damascus, local Arab contingents, converted Hindus of Sindh, and foreign mercenaries like the Turks. All together the invading army may have had anywhere between 20-25,000 cavalry, 10000 infantry, and 2000 camels. In comparison the Rajputs had only 2000-5000 cavalry. The Arab chronicler Sulaiman describes the army of the Imperial Gurjara Pratiharas as it stood in 851 CE in prejudiced manner; *The king of* Gurjars *maintains numerous forces and no other Indian prince has so fine a cavalry. He is unfriendly to the Arabs, still he acknowledges that the king of the Arabs is the greatest of kings. Among the princes of India there is no greater foe of the Islamic faith than he. He has got riches, and his camels and horses are numerous.*[49]

But at the time of the **Battle of Rajasthan** the Gurjar Pratihars had only just risen to power. In fact Nagabhatta was their first prominent ruler. But the composition of his army, which was predominantly cavalry, is clear from the description. There are other anecdotal references to the Indian kings and commanders riding elephants to have a clear view of the

battlefield. The infantry stood behind the elephants and the cavalry formed the wings and advanced guard.

At the time of the battle the GurjarnPratihar may have had up to 5000 cavalry, while their Guhilot and Chauhan feudatories may have had 2000 horsemen each, added to which we may include infantry, camels, and elephants.[50]

Later events

Following their victory the Gurjara Pratiharas spread their rule over North India. The Guhilot Rajputs under their leader Khommana (Bappa Rawal's son) captured Chittor from the Mori Rajputs (who had been weakened by the Arab raid) and the Chauhans established a kingdom in North Rajasthan. Along with their Gurjara Pratihara overlords these clans formed a recognized clan hierarchy (miscalled feudalism), and a hereditary ownership of lands and forts, both of which are hallmarks of the Rajput clan-system. While the word Rajput is derived from the Sanskrit Rajaputra in the Vedic texts, the history of the Rajputs really begins with the clan confederacy that defeated the Arab invaders.

The Arabs in Sindh took a long time to recover from their defeat. In the early 9th Century the governor Bashar attempted an invasion of India but was defeated by Nagabhatta II and his subordinates, Govindraja Chauhan and Khommana II Guhilot. Even a naval expedition sent by the

Caliphs was defeated by the Saindhava Rajputs of Kathiawar. After this the Arab chroniclers admit that the Caliph Mahdi, *"gave up the project of conquering any part of India'."*[51]

The Arabs in Sindh lost all power and broke up into two warring Shia states of Mansurah and Multan, both of which paid tribute to the Gurjara Pratiharas. The local resistance in Sindh, which had not yet died out and was inspired by the victories of their Rajput neighbors manifested itself when the foreign rulers were overthrown and Sindh came under its own Muslim Rajputs[52] dynasties like the Sumras and Sammas.

THE TRIANGULAR STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY IN NORTH INDIA

Towards the latter half of the seventh century AD, there was the almost simultaneous rise of three powers in India- the Gurjara-Pratiharas, the Palas, and the Rashtrakutas, in Malava-Rajasthan, Bengal, and the Dakshinapatha, respectively. As a result of their imperialistic ambitions, their desire to become the paramount power in northern India, and to occupy the position of the cultural capital of India during the reign of Harshavardhana, conflicts between the three powers were unavoidable. Moreover, the city of Kanauj connected the various important routes, like the one from the Ganga to the sea-coast in the south east, another passing through Malava to the western sea coast and the third past the Vindhayas

to the various important cities and centres of trade in the South. The three powers also desired to extend their sway over the rich fertile plains of the Ganga valley. Although the struggles between these three political powers, which extended over a period of about 150 years, took place at various sites from Malava to Bengal, the main centre was the Doab region.

Vatsaraja[53] (*circa* 775-800 AD) laid the foundations of the greatness of the Pratihara dynasty. His greatest achievement was his victory over the Pala ruler Dharmapala. The Radhanpur Inscription of 808 AD of the Rashtrakuta Govinda III says that Vatsaraja snatched away the umbrellas of state from Gauda. This is testified to by the Vanidindori (808 AD) inscriptions of the same ruler. According to *Prithvirajvijaya*[54] during this expendition, Vatsaraja was accompanied by his feudatory, the Chahamana Durlabharaja who 'washed his sword in the Gangasagara'. This has led some scholars to suggest that in the course of this expendition, the Pratihara army reached as the eastern sea-coast. But R.C. Majumdar does not accept this, and places this Pratihara-Pala conflict in the Doab region.[55] Vatsaraja was not able to enjoy the fruits of this victory for long. According to the Radhanpur Inscription,[56] the Rashtrakuta ruler Dhruva defeated Vatsaraja, seized the umbrellas of state that he had wrested from Dharmapala, and forced him to take shelter in

the deserts (of Rajasthan). As Vatsaraja is known from the Jaina *Kuvalayamala*[57] to be ruling at Javalipura (Jalore) around 778 AD he appears to have taken shelter in his old centre of power after being defeated by Dhruva. After defeating and putting to flight Vatsarja, Dhruva advanced towards the Doab, and defeated Dharmapala. But he had to return to his kingdom shortly after. A S Altekar places the northern expedition of Dhruva in 789-90 AD[58]. The defeat of Dharmapala at the hands of Vatsaraja has been placed around 785-786 AD.[59]

After the return of Dhruva to Manyakheta, Vatsaraja succeeded in reoccupying Avanti but he could not recover the lost power and prestige of the Pratiharas. Taking advantage of this, Dharmapala occupied a considerable part of northern India along with Kanauj. He dethroned Indrayudha of that city, and replaced him with his own protégé Chakrayudha According to the Khalimpur Inscription of Dharmapala,[60] the king of Avanti (Vatsaraja) was forced to be present at the coronation ceremony of Chakrayudha at Kanauj. According to the Jaina Herivamsa[61] Indrayudha was ruling at Kanauj in 783 AD. Dharmapala's occupation of Kanauj must have occurred sometime after that date.

The Pratiharas appear to have made a total recovery under Nagabhata II, the son and successor of Vatsaraja. From the Gwalior Inscription of Mihirabhoja, it is learnt that Nagabhata II subjugated the

rulers of Andhara, Sindha, Vidarbha, and Kalinga defeated Chakrayudha at Kanauj, proceeded further and vanquished the Gauda king (Dharmapala), and forcibly occupied the hill-forts of Anartta, Malava, Kirata, Turushka Vatsa, and Matsya.[62] The Rashtrakuta epigraphs claim that like his father Dhruva before him, the Rashtrakuta Govinda III shattered the imperialistic ambitions of the Pratiharas by defeating Nagabhata II. But it is not known whether the Rashtrakuta invasion preceded or followed the successful military campaigns of Nagabhata II, Dasharatha Sharma is of the view that Nagabhata's victory over Chakrayudha and Dharmapala took place after the return of Govinda III.[63]

It would appear that by subjugating Andhra, Sindha, Vidarbha, and Kalinga Nagabhata had become a constant source of danger to the Rashtrakuta power, and Govinda III could not allow this. Before embarking upon his northern campaign, he consolidated his position in Gujarat by appointing his younger brother, Indra, as the viceroy of that region. The Sanjan Cooper-plate of 871 AD of Amoghavarsha states that Govinda destroyed the valour of Nagabhata.[64] The information about this victory of Govinda III over Nagabhata II is corroborated by several inscriptions of Govinda III himself. This event is believed to have taken place somewhere in Bundelkhand,[65] and from there, Govinda III proceeded further and forced Chakrayudha and also Dharmapala to submit.[66] It has been suggested on the basis of the Manne Inscription of

Ranavalokastambha[67] that Nagabhata II had been defeated by Govinda III before 802 AD.[68]

After the return of the Rashtrakutas from northern India, Nagabhata II seized the opportunity to establish his paramountcy there. He defeated Chakrayudha of Kanauj, occupied the city, and assumed the titled of *Paramabhattaraka Maharajadhiraja Parmesvara* as the first Pratihara ruler of Kanauj.[69] Proceeding further to Bihar, he challenged the power of Dharmapala. According to the Gwalior Inscription of Bhoja, Dharmapala, though possessed of 'crowds of mighty elephants, horses, and chariots', was defeated by Nagabhata.[70] From the Jodhpur Inscription of Bauka, it is known that the battle took place at Mudgagiri or Monghry[71]. In this battle, Nagabhata II was assisted by Kakka, the Chalukya Bahukadhavala, and the Guhila Sankaragana.[72]

The triangular struggle for supremacy in northern India was renewed again during the reign of the Pratihara Mihirabhoja. The Gwalior Inscription records that the goddess of royal fortune who had chosen Devapala (the son of Dharmapala) as her lord, became the remarried wife (punarbahu) of Bhoja[73]. The Badal Pillar Inscription of Narayanapala, however, claims that Devapala crushed the conceit of the Lord of the Gurjaras[74]. R S Tripathi[75] identifies this Lord of the Gurjaras[76] with Bhoja. It has been suggested that Bhoja might have suffered defeat at the

hands of Devapala in the initial years of his reign, but by the close of the reign of Devapala, the Pratihara ruler had gained an upper hand.[77]

There is epigraphic evidence of the conflicts of Bhoja with the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta, as also of Gujrat. The Pratihara ruler, after consolidating his position, appears to have taken the offensive against the Rashtrakuta ruler defeated the Gujara ruler (Bhoja) who was eager for battle.[76] But this defeat of Bhoja was that of an invader, and the battle was perhaps fought in the Rashtrkuta territory. A fragmentary inscription in the collection of the Barton Museum records that Bhoja repulsed the attack of Krishna II of the Manyakheta branch of the Rastrkuta dynasty. [79] As against this, the Doli Inscription of 940[80] AD, Karhat Inscription of Krishna III claim that Krishna II had caused consternation to Mihirabhoja. There is further epigraphic evidence[81] to show that the conflict between the Praiharas and the Rashtrakutas for the possession of the Avanti region continued for quite some time. R.S. Tripathi believes that in their struggle with the southern power, the Pratiharas were assisted by their Chahamana feudatories.[82] Dasharatha Sharma is of the view that as there is no inscription of the Gujrat branch of the Rastrakutas after 888 AD, and also no reference to them after that date, the Pratiharas must have occupied Gujarat for some time.[83]

During the reign of Bhoja's son, Mahendrapala I, there was expansion of the Pratihara territories towards the east, at the cost of the

Palas. Several inscriptions of Mahendrapala I, their dates ranging from his second to nineteenth regnal years, have been found from Patna, Gaya, and Hazaribagh districts of Bihar, and Rajshahi district[84] in northern Bengal. R C Majumdar is of the view that the subjugation of these territories of the Palas was the achievement of Mahirabhoja.[85] But it has been pointed out that as there is an absence of his inscriptions in that region, they must have been conquered by Mahendrapala I. It appears that he might have occupied these territories in the course of one or more expendtion (s), and the Pala, Narayanapala, engaged as he was on the eastern front against the Assamese, and on the southern fronts against the Utkalas and the Rashtrakutas, could not do much to defend his territories. During the regin of Mahendrapala I, the Rashtrakutas succeeded in reoccupying Khetaka-mandala (Khera region of Gujrat), which has earlier been wrested from the Rashtrakutas by Mihirabhoja or Mahendrapala himself.

During the reign of Mahipala I, the son and successor of Mahendrapla I, there were two Rashtrakuta invasions of northern India. The Cambay Inscription of Govinda IV[86] records that the intoxicated elephants of Indra III damaged the *mandapa* of the temple of Kalapriya, and that his horses crossed the Yamuna and destroyed Mahodayanagara (Kanauj) famous by the name of Kusasthala, Some scholars identified the

temple of Kalapriya as the Mahakala temple at Ujjain, and opined that the armies of Indra III reached the Gurjara-Pratihara empire via Ujjain.

Pratihara But later, scholars accepted the view that for their northern campaign, the Rashtrakutas chose the route through Bhopal, Jhansi, and Kalpi. They identify the Kalapriya temple with the temple of the sun-god (Kalapriya) at Kalpi (Kalapriya).[87] The *Pampabharata* of 941 AD refers to Narsimha II, a Chalukya feudatory of Indra III. As participating in this expedition, defeating the armies of Ghurjjararaja (Mahipala I), and bathing his horses at the confluence of the Ganga with the ocean while pursuing Mahipala. This expedition has been dated to *circa* 917 AD. Mahipala had, perhaps, to flee from his capital, Kanauj. The Khajuraho Inscription of Dhanga[88] states that the Chandella Harsha reestablished Kshitipaladera on the throne. This Kshitipaladera is identified with Mahipala I. It appears that to reoccupy his throne, Mahipala had to seek the help of his Chandella feudatory after the Rashtrakutas had returned to the south. Taking advantage of this temporary eclipse of Pratiharas power, the Palas reoccupied some of the territories of Bihar and Bengal, earlier lost to the Pratiharas as is shown by epigraphic evidence.[89]

Northern India again had to bear the brunt of Rashtrakuta onslaught during the closing years of the reign of Mahipala, when Krishna III invaded northern India. The Deoli[90] and Karhat Inscriptions[91] state that on

hearing of Krishna Ill's conquest of all the forts in the southern direction, the Gurjjara king lost hope of reoccupying the forts of Kalanjara and Chitrakuta. The reference to the forts of Kalanjara and Chitrakuta does not necessarily imply that they had been occupied by the Rashtrakutas; it merely shows that the Pratihara had lost control of these forts. This invasion is believed to have taken place sometime before 940 AD.

The triangular struggle between the Pratihara the Palas, and the Rashtrakutas must have drained the resources of three powers, and contributed to their downfall.

THE TWO BATTLES OF TARAIN

In 1191, Shahabuddin Ghori, leading an army of 120,000 men, invaded India through the Khyber Pass and was successful in reaching Punjab. Shahabuddin Ghori captured a fortress, either at Sirhind or Bathinda in present-day Punjab state on the northwestern frontier of Prithviraj Chauhan's kingdom. Prithviraj's 200,000 strong army led by his vassal prince Govinda-Raja of Delhi, rushed to the defense of the frontier, and the two armies met at the town of Tarain, near Thaneshwar in present-day Haryana’s Karnaal district, approximately 150 kilometres north of Delhi.[92]

Shahabuddin Ghori's army had been divided into three flanks: left, right and centre with Shahabuddin Ghori himself, on horseback, leading

the centre flank. Taking advantage of the superior numbers and mobile forces Prithviraj opened the attack and continued to keep up a concentrated fire. Simultaneously thrusts were made from both the flanks also and so much pressure were brought to bear upon the enemy that they were forced to give way and soon Muhammad's front became an inverted circle. He was now in a dangerous situation due to the great confusion prevailing in his out-flanked and out-numbered ranks. The two flanks having been defeated and dispersed, the decision was still to be forced in the centre where Muhammad still continued to brave his forces for the final and supreme effort. Continued onslaughts of the Rajputs on front soon made his position very precarious. Two regiments of the Muslim army with Shahabuddin Ghori attacked the center with a body of soldiers; where Shahabuddin Ghori met Govinda-Raja in personal combat Govinda-Raja, mounted on an elephant, lost his front teeth to Shahabuddin Ghori's lance. In addition to being almost twice in number the Hindu Rajput army had another advantage: elephant cavalry comprising of 300 elephants whereas Shahabuddin Ghori's army had no elephants. Many Turk soldiers in Shahabuddin Ghori's army had not even seen elephants before. According to urban myth in contemporary India, the armies clashed first with the charge of the Rajput cavalry. Shahabuddin Ghori's horse cavalry was unable to hold its own against Prithviraj's elephant cavalry. As the battle continued, the Ghori's army,

exhausted, shorn of water, and unfamiliar with the scale of its opponent, retreated and Shahabuddin Ghori himself was captured by the Rajputs [93] This was Muhammad's second defeat in India. The earlier one was at the hands of Bhim Deo II at Anhilwara in 1178. The Rajputs then besieged Bhatinda. Here the Muslims were so well stocked and provisioned that they foiled all attempts of the Rajputs and continued to hold on for full thirteen months. [94]

But having exhibited his gallantry and personal courage, he showed a surprising lack of strategical enterprise and tactical initiative. 'It is sad to reflect that after the first battle of Tarain (1191 AD), in which he won a signal victory over his Muhamadan adversary, he did not press his advantage to the farthest limit. Instead he halted his troops, leisurely besieged the fortress of Sarhind, and neglected to take adequate precautions against the return of the Ghorian chief.[95] He also did not post frontier guards along the mountain-passes of northwestern India, to keep an eye on the movements of Muhammad of Ghur.[96]

Having returned to Ghazni, Muhammad of Ghur raised an army of 1,20,000 horsemen to avenge his defeat at the hands of Prithiviraja.[97] This army comprised Afghan, Taziq, and Turk soldiers. He was also helped by some Indian rulers like Vijayadeva of Jamuna[98] and the king of the Ghataika country.[99] Prithiviraja again marched towards Tarain to meet the

invader with an army of 3,00,000 horsemen and 3,000 elephants.[100] He was joined by one hundred and fifty Indian princes.[101] But Skanda, the commander of his army, who had taken a prominent part in the First Battle of Tarain, was engaged elsewhere. Someshvara the minister of Prithiviraja, on being insulted by his sovereign, joined the Muslims. [102]

After conquering Tabarhindah, Muhammad of Ghur reached Tarain in 1192 AD. Prithiviraja asked him to be content with Tabarindah and the western Punjab, and return to Ghazni. At this, the invader resorted to a stratagem. He informed the Chahamana that he had to seek his brother's permission to withdraw, but till then he would have to encamp there peacefully. [103] The Chahamana army believed him, and indulged in merrymaking, while the Muslim army made preparations for a sudden attack.

A small part of the Muslim army was left behind in the camp to give a false impression that the invading army was peacefully waiting for instructions from Ghazni, while the major portion of the army marched to a point far off from the camp, crossed the river at dawn, and attacked the Chahamana army from the rear. But Prithiviraja, though taken by surprise, skilfully repulsed the attack, and Muhammad of Ghur was forced to retreat to his camp.[104]

Sometime later, Muhammad of Ghur mounted another attack on

the Chahamana camp. In this attack, he proved himself an able strategician. [105] He divided his army into five divisions. While the four of them were required to assail the Rajputs from all the directions the fifth division was kept in reserve as has been remarked he seems to have known the great precept which modem military science has claimed as its own that "in a cavalry combat the side which holds back the last reserve must win". The light unarmoured horsemen were made into four divisions of 10,000, and were directed to advance and harass the enemy on all sides, on the right and on the left, in the front and in the rear, with their arrows.[106] By the afternoon, the Chahamana army had been exhausted by the repeated attacks of these divisions. At this juncture, Muhammad of Ghur attacked the Chahamana army with the 12,000 horsemen he had kept as reserve.

Minhaj-ud-din bin Siraj-ud-din writes, 'By these tactics the infidels were worsted, the Almighty gave us the victory over them, and they fled.[107] Muslim historians record one lakh causalty on the Indian side.[108] Prithiviraja tried to escape on horseback, but was captured near the river Sarasvati.[109] Ajmer was captured, its temples were destroyed, and city itself razed to the ground[110]. According to some sources, Muhammad of Ghur had decided to reinstate Prithiviraja on the Chahamana throne, but later ordered his execution in anger. The reason for this anger is different

in different sources. While some report that Prithiviraja made an intrigue against the Sultan even when a prisoner, others say that the Sultan was angered by the sight of a picture in the royal palace at Ajmer, depicting Muslim soldiers being killed by some pigs.[111]

The *Hammiramahakavya* reports that the conspiracy of the master of the horse and the royal musicians of the Chahamana ruler with Muhammad of Ghur was responsible for the defeat of Prithiviraja in the Second Battle of Tarain.[112] The text informs us that taking advantage of the confusion in the Chahamana camp following the Muslim attack, the master of the horse knowingly supplied to Prithiviraja a horse, named Natyarambha.[113] As soon as Prithiviraja had mounted the horse, the royal musicians started playing on a tune which was the horse's favourite. [114] The animal started dancing to this tune, and Prithiviraja also got so absorbed in the music that all thoughts of battle left his mind. [115] But when the Muslim soldiers surrounded him[116], he dismounted and killed many enemy soldiers before being captured and taken to Delhi. [117] Udayaraja, a general of Prithiviraja, besieged Delhi with a view to freeing his master. [118] But he gave up his life fighting the Muslims when Prithiviraja died after some time in captivity.[119] It is difficult to determine whether there is any element of truth in this narrative.

The *Viruddhavidhi-viddhavams'a* would have us believe that

Prithiviraja lost his life in the battlefield itself.[120] Some sources like the *Prabandhachintamani* would show that he died shortly after the fall of Ajmer.[121] But some scholars believe that for some time after his defeat in 1192 AD, Prithiviraja acted as a subordinate ruler of Muhammad of Ghur. This view is based on the fact that one coin bears the name of Muhammad bin Sam on one side, and of Prithiviraja on the other.[122] P L Gupta regards the occurrence of the two names on one and the same coin as a mistake of the mint officers.[123] D. C. Sircar points out: 'Unfortunately the known facts of the relations between the said two rulers do not speak of any period when one of them could have issued coins as a subordinate of the other. He rightly observes, 'We admit that the real significance of the coin under study is not very easy to explain and is likely to remain doubtful until further evidence on the point is forthcoming. Though a brilliant general Prithviraj lacked the foresight and committed the grave error of fighting the second battle again within his dominions and permitting Muhammad to advance so far forward. He should on have allowed the Sultan to escape from the first battle after he was injured. Knowing his adversary so well he should have made preparations and organized the confederacy much earlier than he did. Coalitions are not always good fighting units and sheer numbers not only increase the difficulties of command and control but add to the confusion when central control is so essential. The second battle was essentially a

general's battle and the triumph of superior generalship as opposed to mere numbers, valour and heroism.[124]

THE BATTLE OF CHANDAWAR

It is seen that sometimes the death of a winning king in the last stages of the battle can lead to the rout of his army. This is illustrated by the Battle of Chandawar which was fought in 1194 AD between the Gahadavala Jayachandra and the Muslim invader, Muhammad of Ghur. As we have seen earlier, Muhammad of Ghur had defeated the Chahamana Prithviraj in the second battle of Tarain (1192 AD), in which enterprise he received the help of some Indian princes also, like Vijayadeva of Jamuna and the king of the Ghataika region.[125] On the basis of the *Prithvirajaraso* of Chand Bardai, it has been suggested that the Gahadavala Jayachandra secretly provided help and encouragement to the invader against his own rival, Prithviraj. But the authenticy of this account has rightly been doubted by modern historians. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the defeat of Prithviraj at the hands of Mushammad of Ghur must have greatly pleased the heart of the Gahadaval a king. [126]

But after occupying Ajmer and Delhi (Probably also Meerut), Muhammad of Ghur marched against Jayachandra. He had a well-organized army of 50,000 horesmen. Some Indian texts like the

Purushpariksha and Rambhamanjari inform us that prior to the Battle of Chandawar, Jayachandra had defeated Muhammad of Ghur several times[127]. It is possible that the Gahadavala ruler was successful in repulsing the invader in the early stages of the struggle. It is reported that Jayachandra had great confidence in his vast army of 10, 00.00 foot-soldiers and 700 war elephant. [128]

In 1194 AD, Muhammad of Ghur made a concerted effort to crush the Gahadavala king. The two armies met at Chandawar, (modern Firozabad), on the Jumna River close to Agra. In this hard-battle, Jayachandra had almost achieved the rout of the Muslim army. But at this crucial juncture, Jayachandra, who was mounted on an elephant, was seriously wounded in the eye by an arrow shot, by Qutb-ud-din. He fell down and lost his life. The death of the leader of the Gahadavala army led to confusion on his side and the lucky invader turned it into a rout.

After this victory, Muhammad of Ghur occupied the fort of Asni (in District Fatehpur), where was located the treasury of the Gahadavalas. This military success not only made the invader extremely rich, but also extended his dominions as far east as varanasi and Chandravati. Surprisingly, Kanauj, which was situated quite near to the battlefield of Chandawar, was not occupied.[129]

Although the Gahadavalas were defeated in this battle and their

ruler lost his life, their power was not completely destroyed by this defeat. There is epigraphic evidence to show that Harishcandra, the son of Jayachandra, was ruling over Mirzpur, Varanasi and Jaunpur regions at least upto 1197-98 AD, as a soverign ruler with the titles of Paramabhattarka Maharajadhiraja Parameshwara.[130]

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CHAPTER–VII
CONCLUSION

The traditional four-fold or five-fold army described in the Epic and *Puranic* literature remained the principal pillar of strength, with few additions / alterations, from the time of Alexander, the Great to up to the end of the Early Medieval period. After the break-up of the mighty *Mauryan* Empire (*c.* 185 B.C.), the defence of northwest frontier of India became a great problem. Repeated foreign inroads—the coming of the Greeks, *Sakas, Parthians, Kushanas, Hunas* and *Gurjaras* and their settlement in the country showed the inferiority of Indian cavalry unambiguously when compared with the strength and mobility of mounted soldiers who came from across the border. The rise of powerful dynasties and well-organized kingdoms and their strong determination to free India from foreigners resulted in the extermination and to some extent the absorption of the foreign races, making India their next abode. But from those difficult days of insecurity and weakness to the stormy times of the Turkish raids and conquests India had been suffering from that handicap. No attempt was made to remove this disability and consequently it remained a weak spot on India's national defence even in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. The Hindu military system, which was at its best in the time of Chandragupta *Maurya*, stood discredited. It

is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that the gradual decay of powerful ruling dynasties in Northern India and steady deterioration of the art of warfare had much to do with the headlong fall of Hindu Kingdoms and their loss of independence. The collapse of the Hindu military system was primarily due to these causes, *viz.*, (a) military; (b) political, and (c) social. The same are being elaborated in detail in the succeeding paragraphs.

(a) Military. The reasons for feeble resistance offered by the Hindu states can be attributed to a cause which was neither sudden nor unexpected. The apparent weakness of Indian horsemen both in number and efficiency was evident ever since the raid of *Subuktigin* on the dominions of *Jayapala* of Bhatinda. India had never a good horse-breeding country and she always suffered due to the scarcity of horses fit enough for war. Only *Sindhu, Balhika, Pragjyotisapura* and *Kamboj* were noted for horse and received unstinted praise from the *Mahabharata, Kalidasa* and *Kalhana*. Good horses were available only in the north and the west, east and south suffered greatly in this respect. The Venetian traveller *Marco Polo* who visited India in the 13th century stated that a large number of horses were imported into southern India from Arabia and. Persia. Malabar was particularly unsuited for breeding-of horses. The climate of South and East India was not suitable for horse-breeding. Moreover, performance of

the Indian cavalry during the period of scrutiny warrants the conclusion that “the cavalry never came to occupy the front rank in the army organization of ancient India; it never in fact came to form the core of a Hindu army”. The emphasis on warfare in India was mostly on positional aspects in comparison to their Turkish counterparts which was very mobile and swift in nature. Turkish horses had lot of endurance and speed, and the period under review was the story of *Hydespese* repeated successively with remarkable similarity of detail.

Muslim historians have attributed the astounding successes of *Mahmud* of *Ghazni* and *Muhammad* of *Ghor* in their campaigns to the skilful use of a well-trained and well-disciplined cavalry. When judged in the backdrop of aforesaid, one of the reasons, for the Muslim invaders having proved themselves as better fighters and thus winning various battles in India, could be easily attributed to the paucity and incompetence of ancient India's cavalry. The best horse-breeding grounds in Asia were under Muslim control. Thus, while Indians failed to bring into the field well trained and war worthy horses, Muslim invaders had their unfailing recruiting grounds in Asia. Sultan Mahmud and Muhammad Ghauri were generals of exceptional ability and took advantage of the tactical blunders committed by the defenders of Indian freedom. It may be incidentally mentioned here that the weakness in

respect of cavalry, artillery, martial technique, manufacture of firearms, education and development of character, was noticeable even in the 18th and 19th centuries when the Marathas gave way to the English. Dr. S. N. Sen observes,—'The Marathas had long been familiar with artillery and firearms, but they neglected to learn the science and technique of these valuable weapons and continued, till their final overthrow, to rely for their supplies on the European settlements at Bombay and Goa.'

Further, another weak spot in Indian military system was researched by Sir J.N. Sarkar who ascribes the failure of Indian armies against European in the 18th century to their want of education and development of character. It is said that greatness in a general consists in his making as few mistakes as possible and in profiting by those of his enemies. One of the main causes of Hannibal's early success against the Romans in the second Punic War (218-216 B.C.) was the personal element of his own genius and strategical blunders committed by the Roman generals because of the divided command. In this connection one is reminded of one of the famous maxims of Napoleon— 'Unity of command is the first necessity of war'. If divided command was one item of Indian failure, the ignorance of what is called "shock tactics", *i.e.*, surprise attack, attack simultaneous and from different directions etc. was another. Nor is there any instance on record of guerilla warfare or

employment of Periclean or Fabian strategy. The Indian rulers opposing the Muslim invaders made use of one tactics, *viz.,* the defensive, whereas the latter were seen to regard the offensive 'as a fundamental proposition of warfare'. The Muslim tactics and resources were suited to the requirements of the time. Then again, the elephant corps, employed in almost all the theatres from the battle of the *Hydaspes* to that of *Tarain* became, in the ultimate analysis, strength of doubtful value. The elephants running amok and creating havoc to friendly forces on the battlefield was responsible for the defeat of certain stout heroes as Puru and Anandapala of the Punjab. Although profuse praise has been bestowed upon war elephants' usefulness and serviceability in big campaigns, they often proved a dangerous element, falsifying the anticipations of ancient writers like Kautilya and comparatively recent writer like Kamandaka. It was not actually the lack of battle worthiness of the elephant but its traditional deployment in the front- rank in the utter disregard of the tactical canons of the age that led to the defeat of the Hindus. The drawing up elephants in the fore and positioning of infantry behind them was aimed at smashing the enemy front line by an on rush of the mighty elephant with the aim of providing infantry with valued break-through into the enemy defences so essential for establishing bridgehead. It was faultless if the charge succeeded and equally ruinous in case of its failure. Rendered unmanageable by the unfailing shooting of enemy

archers, the elephants rolled back crushing friend and foe alike. Sagaciously Mehmud lined up the elephants in his assault formation with nothing at their rear. Accordingly, we find his elephants tossing up his enemy standard- bearers in full view of his masters and crushing all those who dared opposed their advance. The irresistible might of the elephants could also be fully exploited by arraying them in the rear and pushing them into the charge at the most opportune moment. Although, an elephant back provided a vantage point to the commander in the battle field from where he could survey the entire battle and access its progress, yet it was foolish for him to make use of his progress indiscriminately. This exposed the exact location of the leader and drew upon himself the rain of arrows and fire of naphtha balls. The elephant could not withstand the fury of the thousand marksmen. Consequently, the outcome of an action and the fate of the millions came to be decided when a single war beast decided to quit his post. The fault, then, lay with the bankrupt leadership which refused to learn from experience and not with a particular class of war beasts.

Hindus' competency in siege- craft was equally poor. They were fully familiar with all the current techniques at taking and defending the forts, yet they captured the fort of Tabrindah after prolonged siege of 13 months. Their adversaries captured the very same fort in a matter of few

days only. They lacked daredevil dash of Ghazni and his matchless perseverance to suffer odds. This contributed to their weakness both in defence as well as assault of the forts which were pinnacle of contemporary Indian strength.

Ironically, Infantry, the most versatile arm of contemporary army, was allowed to rot as a secondary force. With its ready availability and comparatively cheaper cost of training and maintenance, it could have been developed as kernel in armies like legendary Roman legions. But the Indians failed to grasp true significance of this arm. With a little imagination they could have cut their over-dependence on elephantry whom they did not deploy to their advantage and on the cavalry which were not well bred.

Dr. D.C. Ganguly (Proceedings of the Indian History Congress 1949, p. 123) opines that "the rules of warfare and the code of morals which guided the combatants of the Mahabharata war, guided also the kings and generals in the battlefields throughout the ages before the advent of the Moslems". Onslaught on the rear or on the flanks of the enemy was regarded as a sinful act. To advance in pursuit of a retreating army was not considered as an act of chivalry. Another recent writer says— "The armies of the invaders (*Arab, Turkish* and *Afghan*) were never very large, and their success was partly due to their superiority in

equipment and the art of war". Every Muslim appeared to be a fighter and religion of Islam proved to be a great unifying force. The heterogeneous character of the Indian armies composed of irregulars, corporation troops, levies furnished by feudatory chiefs and all type of people including at time bandits and marauders. The soldiers owed allegiance to their respective feudal lords. Hurriedly raised and inadequately trained, they were adept in every tactics but that of war. Unused to combined operations, they lacked in organization and unity of command and control, so essential for success in war. Thus, heterogeneous army with soldiers from numerous walks of life, of varied antecedents and dubious loyalties, at best, formed a crowd. It could hardly stand up as a bulwark of a nation which itself was composed of groups of mutually hostile people. Pitted against a militant theocracy and an enemy ruthlessly despotic, possessed of singular will and inspired by one Allah, it hardly had a chance of survival.

Excessive addiction to static defence was another important military factor which accounted for the poor performance of Indian armies. No doubt that defence is a very important operation of war. Its aim is to hold the enemy till the fury of attacker is blunted. Defence, as an operation of war, breaks the momentum of the attacking enemy, exhaust their venom and gain enough time to launch counter offensive. The

Indians forgot that the decision in battle through the static defence could not be obtained unless it was fortuitous or the attacker renounced his plans out of sheer exhaustion. Except Jayapala Shahi who twice crossed the river Indus to measure his swords with Ghaznawids, the remaining kingdoms stuck to the age old cult of positional defence. They rated static defence better than the offence and the shield being superior to the sword. Positional defence to them was a sacred axiom to be abandoned only when cut asunder by the enemy. The Muslims, in the Parthian style knew the answer to this sort of tactical situation. They would feign fight, draw their rivals sufficiently away from their defended localities, turn back and cut them to pieces. Mahmud did it in 1010 A.D and Aibak repeated the tactics in the 1197 A.D. It is thus apparent that having formed up in the vyuhas, the Indians did not know how to exploit it to their advantage. They were too devoid of tactical fineness to draw the enemy attack upon their defences, parry his punch, bleed him white and launch counter-attack at the most opportune moment.

Reconniassance by the patrolling parties is the best means of keeping watch on the intentions and movements of the enemy. This was unknown to the Indian commanders. As a result Mohammad Qasim's troops paralyzed by the sickness kept convalescing unmolested for two long months on the banks of Indus and Dahir never got scent of their

plight. During the second battle of Tarain, the Turks conducted successful approach-march on the fateful night and literally caught the Rajputs with their pants down. Vigorous patrolling was the only answer to catch enemy off guard. Geography dictates tactics and strategy and the knowledge of ground (geography) could be best achieved through preliminary reconnaissance unknown in India during the period of scrutiny. As such, the princes of the period failed to make sound appreciations of situations of war faced by them from time to time. These considerations bring us to the point of thinking that the Hindu military organization was obsolete, presenting a sad contrast to the organization, discipline and leadership among the Muslims.

(b) Political: Of the political causes of the military debacle of the 12th century in North India, the first importance must be given, as most writers have done, to the division of India into innumerable small principalities without cohesion, without a sense of unity for the common purpose. The aims and ideals of the ruling houses working at cross-purposes rendered a united stand fruitless and their sudden fall might properly be assigned to the fact that they, unlike the Muslim invaders, were not perhaps prone to fight for a cause, — religious or political. Secondly, the state and the army organization of the *Rajput* princes who were left to defend the vast country from the successive blows of the *Turks* and *Afghans*, was feudal

in character. The army consisted chiefly of contingents supplied by *Samanta* chiefs. Such a feudal army was hardly motivated to attain a common goal. The princes themselves were no doubt patterns of heroism and courage, but the army on which they relied, being mostly *Samanta* forces, obeyed their overlord and not unoften seized the opportunity of combining against him when for one reason or the other he happened to be weak. The King was the pivot of the state the security of which hinged upon the loyalty of his fief-holders. When there was peace in the country the vassals became restless and when external dangers threatened them, their services were not always as valuable as they should have been. As a hint has been given previously in this regard that a new phase in ancient Indian polity discovered from the *Gupta* period onwards that there were clear signs of feudal tendencies which resulted in the speedy growth of a number of feudal chiefs bearing the titles of *Samanta, Mahasamanta, Senapati, Mahasenapati, Maharaja*, etc. These chiefs enjoyed local autonomy while paying allegiance to the *Gupta* sovereign as their suzerain. Even the countrywide military exploits and conquests of *Samudragupta* failed to bring the whole of India under his direct administration. A uniform administrative control over areas lying outside the *Gupta* dominion being impossible owing to the separatist trend in Indian politics, a compromise was worked out between strict imperial control and full local autonomy. The *Gupta* emperor had to fall back

upon the *Kautilyan* ideal of *'Dharmavijaya*. It is pertinent to point out here that all empires or consolidated kingdoms were for all practical purposes, no better than confederation of vassal states from the fourth century A.D. The feudal character which the army and government assumed in the *Gupta* age continued right up to the end of the *Pala* period. *Rajputana* was the home of Feudalism and the Rajput states retained this character all through,—a government that fostered isolationism and stood in the way of coalition of political forces to combat a common danger. "The main reason why the Muslims so easily obtained their hold in India", says Mr. Coupland, "was the failure of the Hindu Kingdoms to combine against them. In the middle ages, at any rate, Christian Europe did better in this respect. French troops crossed the Pyrenees to help the Spaniards. The Crusades, despite their undercurrents of intrigue and greed, were a genuine manifestation of the unity of Western *Christendom*." It seems quite true that the imperial sway or political supremacy either in Northern India or Southern India was not accompanied by a stable equilibrium due to internal disruption and discord. The question of national defence and territorial security was thrown into the cold shade of neglect. The lesson of history has taught Modern India to think of that eternal problem of the country's defence against foreign attack. Before India attained freedom in 1947, a section of Indian leaders raised the cry of "Undivided India - Union with a strong

centre" solely in the interest of unity, uniformity and military defence.

Turning now to India south of the Vindhyas, we notice the utter incompetence of the South Indian states like Devagiri, Dwarsamudra, Telingana, Tanjore and Madura to cope successfully with the new Muslim master of the North. This fact perhaps supplies an illustration of the general belief that imperial sway in India was, due to the operation of many causes, out of gear, and even superiority in number and organization of unions failed against foreign onslaught. If coalitions succeeded, they succeeded only against neighbouring kingdoms—The North against the South, the East against the West, but never effectively against a formidable foreign foe. Patriotism ceased to be the effective instrument of national defence. Self-interest and mutual jealousies were of greater concern than the interest of the country as a whole. Political revolutions taking place in distant or near regions scarcely raised an echo in the minds of the masses. The people did not feel that they were a nation. Speaking of the causes of ancient India's political decline Sisir Kumar Mitra writes,—"The cultural and spiritual unity remained almost intact, no doubt, but the country had little political integrity worth the name, mainly because the society,—always in ancient India the basis of her political structure,—had ceased to be a cohesive force in the communal consciousness of the people."

(c) Social: The subjugation of such a vast country with age-long civilization could not be affected and the stately fabric should not have crumbled unless some forces other than political and military had been at work slowly but surely shaking the entire foundation. This would lead us to consideration of the social causes of the fall of the Hindu Kingdoms in the 12th and 13th centuries. Instances were not rare in the period under review when Indian fatalism served to a large extent to enfeeble the will to resist in the face of a danger of the gravest magnitude. We see certain instances where consultations were held with astrologers to ascertain the inevitable. Two such instances are on record. At the time of the Arab invasion of *Sind Dahir, King of Alor,* said to an astrologer, "I must fight to-day; tell me in what part of the heavens the planet Venus is and calculate which of the two armies shall be successful and what will be the result." The astrologer replied, "According to the calculation the victory shall be to the Arab army, because Venus is behind him and in front of you." *Rai* was angry on hearing this. The astrologer said, "Be not angered, but order an image of Venus to be prepared in gold." It was made and fastened to his saddle traps in order that Venus might be behind him and he might be victorious. *Lakshmanasena*, the last independent ruler of Bengal convened a meeting of astrologers, wise men and counsellors after the fall of Bihar and sought their advice. Relying on the *Sashtras,* they predicted that Bengal would fall into the hands of the

Turks next year and requested him to move from the country so that they all might be safe from the molestation of the Turks. According to *Minhaj-u-din*, a large number of Brahmins and others fled, although the *Rai* himself did not take the fatal step, "Making allowance for some measure of exaggeration by historians, we must not ignore the fact that superstition, fatalism and panic played their part in bringing about the collapse of the *Sena* resistance in connection with the Nadiya raid of c. 1197-98. AD

Some writers, *e.g.*, C.V. Vaidya, are disposed to regard the caste system as one of the contributory causes of the downfall of Hindu independence. Nobody can deny that the caste system, the bedrock of the *Brahamanical* social organization divided the community into separate compartments, made unity difficult and exercised an unwholesome influence on the life of the people. But the system which took root in the third century B.C. and stood the test of time (some three thousand years) did not prevent India from creating big empires and defending them against foreign attacks. The *Maratha* leader Shivaji's empire was based on Hindu principles of caste and *dharma* as laid down in the *Arthashastra* and the *Sukraniti*, yet Shahji's illustrious son held his own and could not be checked by the Moghuls of Delhi, the Portuguese of Goa and the Abyssinians of Janjira. It did not take away the power of Hindu resistance

in an appreciable manner, either in ancient, medieval or modern times. Concerning the question whether the endless ramification of caste which was at its height in the Hindu period seriously affected recruitment to the army, Dr. Chakravarty has conclusively proved by reference to ancient texts that the military profession was no monopoly of any particular caste. As in Medieval Europe, so in Medieval India, fighting was the sole occupation of feudal knights. So the enrolment of all the classes or the masses was possible neither in India nor in Europe till the dawn of the modern age. One writer has gone to the length of suggesting that in early medieval period 'Hindu intelligence found expression, more in poetics and dramaturgy than in the careful cultivation of the art of war and that the army consisting chiefly of contingents supplied by *Samantas* was not reliable either in respect of number or efficiency'. In the circumstances, neither caste nor the doctrine of *Ahimsa* which is said to have affected the food of the people and made them physically weak, was the real explanation of the catastrophe overtaking India in the 12th century. The loss of political freedom was not an isolated phenomenon. It must have been preceded by social stagnation and moral decay.

The tendency to luxurious living and moral dissipation of the Hindus as portrayed in the *Gita-Govinda* and the *Pavanaduta* composed by the court-poets of Laksmanasena, in the *Naisadacharita* written in the

court of *Jayachandra* of *Kanouj*, in the *Sishupalavadha* composed in the court of the Valabhi King, appears in all its nakedness. As the people had no share in the government and as there was a frequent change of dynasties of autocratic rulers, it was but natural that they (the people) would grow indifferent to political revolutions in the country. In the days of Hindu decadence the system of giving extensive training to the soldiers as enjoined by the *Ramayana, the Arthashastra* and the *Shukraniti* was not strictly adhered to. The feudal character of the *Rajput* government and army from which the masses were completely divorced was an additional reason why the people refused to be interested in such matters as the names and antecedents of persons occupying the thrones of Delhi, Kanouj, Varanasi or Gauda after the destruction of some of the Rajput ruling houses. The apathy of the common man to the political fortunes of his country was much in evidence.

Thus, the probable explanation of the fall of the Hindu States, is not one, but many. Mass indifference, internal decay, deterioration in the method of warfare and superior military abilities of the Turks coming from cooler regions with a fund of redoubtable energy and flashing promptitude were the four important factors which contributed to the collapse of the Hindus. Dr. P.C. Chakravarty seems to think that the invaders, *e.g.,* the Turks possessed moral virtues (by which he means

courage, energy and determination) in a larger measure, and he goes on to say that "a civilized and prosperous community is not a congenial soil for the natural development of these virtues, and the Hindus were infinitely more civilized and prosperous than the Turks", There is much force in Dr. Chakravarty's argument that the Hindus when they reached the highest point of civilization failed to retain moral virtues in an equal degree with the invading Turks despite their age-old military tradition with its emphasis on endless wars and ceaseless extension of territories etc. It is true, as Lord Bryce points out rightly, that 'there is no necessary connection between a fighting quality and an intellectual quality'. This suggests a parallelism between Hindu downfall and the fall of the Roman Empire in the West at the stress of Germanic tribes. The cause of the fall of the latter with a boundary in no way less extensive than that of Hindu India was both military and political. In the words of Davies the real cause was a moral evil, the decay of civic virtue. By moral evil he does not mean deterioration in private life. "It is a mere superstition", he says, "that every victorious race is chaste and frugal, just and law-abiding or that failure in the struggle for existence is a symptom of the contrary vices. In many respects the Greeks who submitted to Philip and Alexander were morally superior to the victors of Salamis and Plataea. Private and political morality may spring from the same root, but the one has often flourished where the other has been stunted."

But at the same time History, ancient and modern, does not furnish us with a single example of a country going down before an invading horde and losing political freedom with-outcome serious internal disruption and decay. Thus the main reasons why a vast and highly civilized country like India succumbed to external attack appear to be her internal weakness and possession of a higher technique of warfare by her enemies. The absence of a higher technique of warfare in the early medieval period together with the country-wide internal disorder, a legacy of centuries of inaptitude and inertia, was bound to create an alarming situation. Such was the real picture when the curtain dropped down upon the Hindu political drama. Hence in nutshell, the most vital lessons were the lack of vigorous and dynamic action due to passivity of the religious dogmas, blind adherence to traditions, undue emphasis on positional defence which developed into fortress mentality, lack of a strong mobile arm, undue faith in the strength of the elephant arm, adherence to the Homeric type of warfare thus not giving a chance to the division of forces to bear their full weight on the enemy, lack of strategic planning and co-ordination of large forces on the field of battle, tendency to amass large forces without adequate care to gain qualitative superiority, undue emphasis on chivalry and blind sacrifice instead of resorting to tactical maneuvers to fight another day, plethora of weapons which was of no use as the enemy was always equipped with better

weapons.

Let us hope that the errors, imperfections and slacknesses of the past shall not be repeated. The policy on the national defence must be alive and relevant to the present situations and not to the past. In spite of the theory of peaceful coexistence based on the ancient Indian ideal of *"Panchsheela"* and with the threat of atom bombs and present-day desire for more territories and no progress of disarmament in world affairs, is not maintenance of territorial integrity still a serious problem? And the conditions like political interference in the internal affairs of defence might jeopardize the cutting edge of the defence forces. Here it is important that the armed forces of the country for which every citizen of the country feel proud of due to their professionalism and selfless service to the nation should be treated with a great respect, love and care. The bureaucrats or the politicians should not be allowed to tamper with the fine balance between the armed forces and the civil society by trying to neglect the dues. There must be a consensus among the political class over dealings pertaining to defence forces.

SUMMARY

The instinct of self-defence, which is so strong even among the smallest insects, has been present ever since the dawn of human history. From the lower Paleolithic times, human beings have been fighting and defending against nature and wild beasts, and with their steady march from barbarism to civilization and the gradual development of intellectual pursuits, human beings have discovered weapons firstly to defend themselves, as also to defend their family and clan, and finally their own territory and nation. In India which is the home to one of the oldest civilizations of the world, the people passed through all the processes of individual, clan and territorial fighting in the different stages of their interestingly long and complex history. Northern India, which has always been very prosperous with its snowy mountains and silvery plains, is mute witness to countless battles since the days of the *Rigveda*. Kingdoms rose and fell in never-ending succession. This amply justifies the dedication of one fourth of the Rigvedic hymns to Indra, the God of War. The fact is manifested in the case of the Puranas and two other great epics - the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. War has always affected the lives of the millions and hence any worthwhile study of warfare is bound to be dubbed as incongruous when done independent of major factors affecting it i.e., geographical, socio-philosophical and political.

Therefore, before elaborating on warfare in the early medieval period of Indian history, it is incumbent to peruse these factors in some detail. Under the Geographical factor, location, size and shape, climate, physiographic, people, economic development and communications have been prominent. This factor is essential because every aspect of geography affects military operations, tactics as well as strategy. Military geography embodies the study of the physical geography with a view to assessing its suitability for strategic maneuvering.

On the socio-philosophical turf, the various aspects of the contemporary Indian society (such as religion and outlook towards life, belief in superstition and astrological forecasts, economic conditions, literature, art and architecture, hindu militarism**,** causes of war etc.) are worth analysing, because these dictated the general, social and philosophical health of the contemporary Indian society.

Towards the end, the most important aspect, the political situation of the contemporary India also need to be studied in detail. The curtain rises with the young Harshvardhana struggling to climb the political stage of North India. After Harshvardhana, the Guptas and the Maukharis ruled over major parts of Madhyadesha with Kannauj as their capital. The Maitrakas ruled over Saurastra and Western Malwa and the Pushyabhutis or Vardhanas at Thaneshwar in the Haryana of present day (East Punjab).

The Huna incursions from the north-west had caused great upheavals. Their advances were marked by rapine, massacre and barbarism.

When Harshvardhana died without any heir sometimes in 647-48 AD, the distant provinces fell off one by one. Each petty principality vied to become an emperor at the cost of its neighbours. Empire of the later Guptas, in Magadha was revived by Adityasena. The Maukharis became supreme in Kanauj and in Valabhi. Gradually, numerous others lesser known principalities like those of the Gurjars-Pratiharas and Karkotakas of Rajputana, Punjab and Kashmir respectively came to the forefront. Thus semblance of law and order was restored in North India. During this time, the kingdom of Kannauj, however, was revived by the legendary Yashovarman. He ended the career of the Gupta King, subjugated Vangas of eastern and central Bengal and reached Narmada, in the south Rajputana and Thaneswar also formed part of his empire. However, the career of this illustrious ruler was cut short by his erstwhile accomplice Lalitaditya of Kashmir.

This was the time when the attention is also turned towards the western horizon of India where the mighty whirlwind of Arab hordes had uprooted and thrown to dust the Brahmana dynasty of Sindh in A.D 712. During the time, the formidable Arabs were stopped at the gates of India by the mighty Gurjara-Pratiharas who had settled in Rajputana a century

and a half before them. By 836 AD, the Pratihara dynasty was firmly established in Kanauj and before the end of the 9th century their commands were obeyed all over the territory stretching from Pehoa in Haryana to Deogarh in central India, and from Una in Kathiawar to Paharpur in North Bengal.

Bengal had lost its political cohesion after the death of Sasanka. The foreign incursion set in complete lawlessness in Bengal. Each landlord established an independent principally. Out of this anarchy rose Gopala, elected by all barons. The powerful Pala dynasty came into existence with him. In the Northern India, this was the time of famous "Tripartite Struggle" between three powers, Gurjara- Praiharas, Palas from the north and Rashtrakutas from the south, fighting constantly with one other to secure their influence over Kannauj, which was under the dynasty of "Ayudhas" being ruled by two weak and jealous brothers, Chakrayudha and Indrayudha,. In this long struggle eventually, Gurjara-Pratiharas came out victorious. Among the powers, which rose over effete Gurjara Pratihara empire, were the Chandellas, Parmaras, Kalachuris, Chaulukyas, Chahamanas, Guhilas and a score of small families. In the period before the rise of Sultan Mahmud to power, Chandellas of Jajakabhukti (Bundelkhand) under Dhanga (954-1008 AD) and Parmara Vakpati Munja (974-995 AD) deserve special mention.

The Chahamanas (famous Chauhans of the late period) were the feudatories of Gurjara-Pratiharas and their most important branch ruled over sapadalaksa country with Sakambhari (modern Sambhar) as their Capital. Another dynasty, which was destined to play heroic role in the Indian history later, was the Guhilas or Guhilots of Mewar. They were also vassals of the Pratiharas. It was Bhartipatta who threw off the Pratihara suzerainty sometimes in the middle of 10^{th} century AD. Our discussion of the Indian political scene will not be complete without a mention of Shahis of the Kabul valley. Their capital was shifted to Udabhandapura in 870 AD. The Shahis waged a brave and relentless fight against the Ghaznawids who could advance into India, who found shelter in his capital city. At this stage we may also touch upon the institution variously termed as feudalism. The system as it existed in India did not quite fit with the definition of the term as known to the Western authorities. A.L. Basham calls is as 'Quasi-feudalism' where by Indians had a system of over-lordship, the vassals having their own vassals or pretty chieftains these jagirdar or Bhoktas had specified rights and duties and a very important role to play in socio-political conditions in the contemporary India. This was the time when Mohammad Gauri waged a series of famous battles against India, These famous battles were known as Battles of Tarain and these changed the course of politics in India forever and a new ruling clan stalled over Northern India: The Slaves.

Now after discussing the general conditions in India, let's dwell upon the Composition of the army in India, The state, according to the writers on ancient Hindu polity, was constituted of seven elements. These are: the sovereign, the minister, the territory and people, fortified city (to serve as capital), treasury, army and allies. Thus the army had always been very important in Indian political setup. The texts like Arthashastra and Shukranitisara also mentioned the contemporary importance of the army. Army has been defined as having four folds or sometimes even three folds. The four fold division of the army is defined in Jatakas and it was generally called as Chaturanga bala. The term became a general term for army having less than the four traditional sections, viz., infantry, cavalry, elephants and the chariots. The use of the Chariots in the warfare was virtually stopped after the 7^{th} century as we do not find any frequent mention of this wing during our research period. The chariots suffered from serious limitations. While its employment in plains proved it to be remarkably destructive instrument of war, it failed woefully when fielded under difficult geographical conditions. As the area of struggle for empires widened with time, the principle of surprise became very important. Surprise could be better achieved by the fast moving cavalry forces and the versatile elephants. Both of these could operate in almost all types of terrain. The changes came gradually as a result of experience on the field. It is thus clear that during our period the army had become

three fold consisting of infantry, cavalry, and elephant force. We also come across a term *Shadangabala* (six fold army) which has been used by the author of the *Prithvirajavijya*. It also finds mention in the *Skandhapurana*, wherein the two new wings were camels and bullocks. Some of other limbs, viz. transport and commissariat, navy, espionage, department of scouts and guides of the *Mahabharata*, were also being retained but only as part of 'tail' to the teeth' of the armies. After discussing the fundamental principles of military organization in ancient India, it is essential to study at some length the structure of each of the above-mentioned four divisions of the army. The cavalry was kept well equipped and well maintained and its primary roles were to supervise the discipline of the army, lengthening the line of the army, protecting the flanks of the army, attack first and with fast pace. The next important division of elephants was also looked after by a very well-organized department. They rendered numerous and varied services in all operations of war. They cleared the routes of advance of shrubs and trees, helps in preparing camping sites, protecting the flanks, form temporary bridges for river crossing operations and over any other water obstacles. They forced entries into enemy fortifications by battering down gates and other defensive works. The third division of chariots had developed its own technique. Chariots generally had two wheels and not four. Its function was to provide a stable and dynamic platform to the warriors. The last

division of infantry consisted of various types of soldiers. Infantry was an arm best suited for close combat. It used to meet the enemy at an arm's distance, put him to the swords or captures him. The payment to the troops used to be made regularly either in kind, cash or both; some share in plunder also was allowed to them. Besides, grants of lands were given to them in reward of their services. The entire organization was under a *Sachiva* or war-secretary. In the end, a word may be said about the existence of naval force in ancient India. It is generally held that "No naval war was ever fought in Indian waters in the early stages of History, but we have found that the political successors of the *Palas- Chandras*, *Varmanas*, and the *Senas*, acquired not only their territories but also their naval traditions. Navy was generally employed for commerce and transportation of military supplies. No wonder, the records of the period after the great *Kautilya*, do not speak much about the administration and functioning of the navy.

A good military leader must dominate the events which encompass him. He, therefore has got to anticipate enemy reactions to his own moves and to take quick steps to prevent interference with his own plans. Therefore, a first-rate intelligence service is a major requirement of an operational plan for knowing enemy's intentions as well as his reaction to our plans. In the *Arthashastra*, there are four important chapters on this

institution. Spies in the guise of a fraudulent disciple, a recluse, a householder, a merchant, an ascetic, a *sattri*, a firebrand, a prisoner and a mendicant woman were employed by the king. In this way, Kautilya speaks of a number of spies in different guise and professions, who were entrusted with onerous responsibilities and obligations and on whose work, rested the weal or woe of the kingdom. The description shows an elaborate network of the spy system. In the post- Kautilyan period also, the old institution worked regularly.

Now, the question arises about the administration of the army; in peace times, war times, and the types of forts and fortifications that existed during the period of study. In peace times, the composition and recruitment of the army was very carefully designed. The assertion of Arabs, that except Balhara no other Indian king maintained standing array, is baseless. The fact is that most of the leading dynasties of the period had large standing armies. The armies were composed of the following types of troops: Regular troops, Feudal levies, Irregular levies, Corporation troops. There is no doubt that "of the four great classes *Kshatriya* was the warrior par excellence …. but all classes took part in war. Besides a *brahmana*, the recruitment to army was open to all classes. The *sudras* were also not debarred. Some Indian kings were known to have Muslims on their pay roll. Dahir of Sindh is worth mentioning in

this connction, where it was seen that the armies of the period were open institution with no restrictions of caste or creed. Army is a large body of troops, a body with numerous wings and adjuncts. It was organised into small manageable units which were to function efficiently in war as well as peace. The organisation of administration in army contributes directly towards effective command and control, for quick marshalling, for prompt concentration and for smooth dispersion. Patti, Senamukha, Gulma, Guna, Vahini, Pratna, Camu, Anikini, Aksauhini were the various terms used in this connection. *Mahasandhivigrahadhikrita, Baladhikrta Kokkata, Mahabaladhikrita Mahasenapati and, Kampanesa* were some of the various terms used to define the various ranks in the army of the era under study. *Khail-tash, qaid, sarhang, hajib* were the various army ranks in contemporary muslim army. All troops in a province were under the *sipah-salar.* Besides, *arid* or *sahib-i-diwan-i-ard,* was the head of the military department. Another important aspect which demands our consideration at this stage is the question of pay and allowances of the soldiers. The pay scales were attractive enough to keep officers and men contented and beyond pecuniary temptations. In addition to pay, the soldiers were entitled to certain marching allowances while on active service. The *Rajatarangini* provides us with numerous such examples. The war veterans were properly looked after and battle casualties were provided due medication.

During the war, Supplies, Means of transport and Medical cover etc. were properly taken care. In spite of the administrative work in peace and administrative work in war time, there was a routine administrative work of construction and maintenance of strategically important forts and fortifications. The need to provide protection against enemy, beasts and nature, led the kingdoms to construct forts and build fortifications. Water fort or audaka, *Mountain fort or parvata Desert fort or dhanvana*, Forest-fort or vandurga were the various categories of forts.

Arms and weaponry also underwent a gradual process of evolution like many other things of life. Various classifications of weapons were based on their characteristics. *Pani-mukta and*, *Muktasandharita* were the weapons which were not thrown. While the *Amukta* were the kind of weapons which were not thrown. *Muktamukha* were those which could be wielded in both ways, while Mantramukta, were the weapons which were thrown by means of spells. Bow and Arrow, poisoned arrows, fire arrows, inscribed arrows, barbed arrows, cross arrows, sword , spears and javelins, lance, mace, dagger, battle-axe,vajra or thunderbolt, noose, discuss or quoits, sataghni or hundred killer, sling, boomerang were various other types of weapons used that time. Further, weapons were divided into immovable and movable ones. The use of the terms like *varman,*[250] *kavacha*[251] *sannaha* prove that some kind of body armour or corselet was

in use by the warriors of the Vedic age. Lohajalika, Patta, Kavacha, were iron made body armours.

The wars during the period of study were fought by using various strategies and tactics. The strategy, as a comprehensive term, covers planning of war and conduct of troops to the point of battle. The selection of operational base, lines of communication and possible diversion, marches of armies and supply points are all covered under the term strategy which decides what and where the combination of forces are to be affected, what fortifications are to be relied upon to thwart enemy advance and provide refuge to forces in distress. We do study the following concepts into the wider concept of strategy and tactics. Strategy also encompassed the line of march, the time and season of march, religious ceremonies, order of march, formation for move, navigation, discipline, opposed river crossing, ambuscade, defence and patrolling, suitable site for the battlefield, consultation with the astrologers. The term "Tactics" included siege of forts, deployment for battle, the battle formations, time for the commencement of action, harrass, exhaust and charge, dismounting for combat, duels, turning the flank and envelopment, intrigues, final assault and employment of reserves, importance of correct deployment, colligation in fighting, night attacks, retreat and pursuit.

During this time period, numerous wars were fought over a period of time. We have discussed here few deductions drawn from some of the famous battles only. The battle of Rajasthan is a battle (or series of battles) where the Hindu Rajput clans defeated the Muslim Arab invaders in 738 CE. While all sources (Hindu and Muslim) agree on the broad outline of the conflict and the result, there is no detailed information on the actual battle(s). There is also no indication of the exact places where these battles were fought—what is clear is that the final battle took place somewhere on the borders of modern Sindh-Rajasthan. Following their defeat, the remnants of the Arab army fled to the other bank of the River Indus. Here the types of equipments of the fighting armies have been discussed.

The battle between Harshavardhan and Pulakeshin II, the date of the battle between Harsha and Pulakeshin II is not certain, but the fact, that it took place during or before AD 634, is amply proved since it finds mention in the Aihole Inscription (compiled by the famous poet Ravikirti) of that era on the bank of river Narmada. Here the numerical and compositional structures of the two armies have also been studied in detail.

The famous triangular struggle which lasted for about 200 years between Gurjara-Pratiharas, Palas, and Rastrakutas is discussed in detail.

The series of wars, which were fought during this time, were aimed to capture the Kanauj. Ultimately Pratiharas remain victorious since they lasted longer. In the end, the two very famous battles Tarain I and Tarain II have been discussed. These wars were fought between Mohammad Gauri and Prithviraja III. These wars are regarded very important because of these being the test of strategy and tactics, quality of military equipments and leadership in the battlefield between the two different armies. After these wars the political scenario in India changed completely and finally a new series of rulers came to the royal throne of Delhi with Qutubbuddin Aibek as their first ruler in 1206 A.D. With the change of guard at Delhi sultanate, the military system in India also changed drastically.

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MILITARY SYSTEM IN NORTHERN INDIA (606 AD-1206 AD): A STUDY

Statement of the Problem:

It is a matter of common understanding that ancient Indian kings were not only concerned with art, literature, religion and philosophy but also War and diplomacy, expansion and imperialism occupied much of their time and energy. They ruled empires, trained and fashioned soldiers, led armies in the battle, created navies, erected fortifications, planted colonies, and carried on with diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries. But in spite of all that, the underlying principle governing foreign policy of the various rulers in India in the past was peace and not aggression. It has been observed that the importance of the army in relation to the state did not diminish. In this reference we may quote ancient political thinker *Shukra* who observes, - ' King is the root of the tree of the state, the ministry is its trunk, the military chiefs are branches, the army are the leaves of the tree and the subjects are its flowers, prosperity of the country its fruits, and the whole country the final seed '. Generally, the scholars blame the downfall of economic and social conditions for the defeat of the northern Indian rulers against their contemporary foreign counterparts' viz., the Arabs, the Turks etc. due

importance has not been given to the reasons related to the military structure of the Indian rulers of the northern India. But this View of the scholars seems biased especially when we consider the following facts of military system of the northern India from 606 A.D to 1206 A.D—

1. It is given in the *Jataka,* Epics, and *Shukranitisara* that the traditional complexion of the ancient Indian army was *Chaturangabala* or *Chaturangnini sena* persisted from the 6th century BC to 7^{lh} century AD. It is also well known that the old game of chess also goes by the name of *Charuranga.* It is also noted that the relative values of the chess pieces were analogous to or identical with the relative values of the different arms as laid down by *Kautilya*, *Shukra* and *Vaisampayana.* On the other hand in the *Kamandakanitisara* we find the six limbs of the army or *shadangabala,* these limbs were Chariots, Elephants, Infantry, Cavalry, Camalry, Navy and Commissariat. *Somedeva* refers to one more division of the army known as *'Autsahika bala'* this special battalion consisted of royal princes, knights, and soldiers well versed in arms. Under the proposed research work, all these various limbs of the army will be studied in depth and the arms, equipment and their battle strategies will be studied and compared against their contemporary foreign armies.

2. During the early and the later Vedic periods it was a usual practice with warriors to shoot arrows from their chariots, and even in the age of *Magadhan* greatness there is evidence of men showering arrows riding on Chariots and elephants. There is not a single reference before the Scythian period to the horse archers. But in their coins kings *Azes I, Azisiles, Azes II* and *Satrap Zeionises* appears as horsemen provided with bows. From certain types of the coins of the Gupta period it is possible to conclude that horse archery was in use in the Gupta period. *Chandragupta II, Kumaragupta I and Prakashaditya* are represented in coins as horse archers. But this strategy was soon abandoned and it was only after a gap of almost three centuries, in the 8th century during the *Gurjara-Pratihara's* dynasty when the neighing was again heard in the battlefield. The fact that the *Gurjara- Pratiharas* were expert horsemen is also accepted by Arab traveler *Suleman* (A.D850) in the following words, "The king of *Jurz (Pratiharas)* maintained numerous forces and no other Indian prince had so fine a cavalry." In this regard we need to know why the Indian rulers hesitated to use the horse archery in their military despite the following facts-

   (a) Horses were lavishly imported from the west and central Asia and its trade had not stopped even with the rise of

Islam.

(b) *Sindhu, Balhika, Prayagjyotishpur* and *Kamboja* situated in northern India were noted for fine quality horses and have received unrestrained praise from the *Mahabharata, Kalidasa, and Kalhana.*

(c) Indian forces badly needed swiftness and rapidity in wars, they lacked in this field and largely because of these weaknesses their foreign counterparts overpowered them in wars.

(d) The *Bhagalpur* inscription of the *Pala* dynasty states that the contemporary northern states which were famous for producing fine quality of war horses used to export them to the *Palas.*

3. There were many references to the Chariots in the *Samahitas* and in the *Brahamanas.* The importance and value, of the Chariots in the warfare can be seen in the epics also. The *Arthashastra* mentions a special officer called the superintendent of Chariots *(Rathadhyadhaksha)* and lays down in various details, rules regarding the sphere of his duties. So the use of the Chariots in the military was time tested, but from the fourth century onwards, its

use in the war declined considerably or rather stopped altogether. Under the proposed research work I would analyze those circumstances because of which its use was neglected. It is proved by the copper plate grants of the *Palas* (750A.D-1150A.D) that the Chariots had been in constant use in wars even after the fourth century. There are illustration of chariots and armed warriors in the *Paharpur Plate No.: LVII.* No doubt that, the Chariots were a favourite branch of army in the ancient world because of their mobility and rapidity, but it could be used only on such grounds as are splendidly firm, free from the mounds, tree and plants. But when, the majority of the land type in the northern India is splendidly firm and mound free than it could have been used in the north also, but it was not so, why? During the proposed research work the answer to this question will be searched.

4. Elephants were used in the war excessively and their usefulness is well accepted in the *Puranas. Magasthanese* explains how the elephants were hunted and how their distempers were cured. The detailed study of the battle of *Hydespes* shows the superiority of the elephant corps over the other divisions of the army. Elephants were used in the war excessively and their usefulness is accepted by *Kautiiya* in the following words: "it is on elephants that

the destruction of an enemy's army depends". But the elephant was slow moving and at the same time a wounded elephant went out of control and injured friends and foes indiscriminately. In this context we may quote *Shukranitisara* which while dealing with the composition of the army warn the Indian kings against the excessive use of the elephants in the army. Indian armies were defeated by Greeks, Scythians, Arabs and Turks largely because of the unwise use of elephants in the war.

But it is strange that Indian military experts who were experts in elephant science learned nothing from the past experiences and kept on using the elephants in the same old fashion on the other hand the foreigners made much better use of elephants received or snatched from the Indian kings in their army to win wars. For example we may quote *Mahmud* of *Ghazni* who secured no less than 2500 elephants from India and made a much better use of them at the war fronts in Central Asia. So it is necessary to find out in what way the Indian kings could have utilized the elephants to win wars, like their foreign counterparts did. Also the use of Chariots declined in the post *Mauryan* period because of its cumbersome nature but surprisingly the Indian kings did not cease to use the elephant corps, which was even more cumbersome, why? If it was not possible then

could it be substituted by anything else? And why so much importance was given to the static mode of warfare in comparison to the dynamic mode of warfare which was also the need of the hour?

5. The increasing size of infantry in the army was considered to be a source of strength. *Bhishma, Kautilya, Shukra* accepted the predominance of infantry in the army to win wars. In the army of *Harsha* at the beginning of his campaign, the foot soldiers numbered 50,000. The Infantry constituted by far the largest single unit in the army but was certainly not the most important. It was assigned the subsidiary role of carrying weapons. Foot soldiers were referred to mere camp followers of the charioteer and the elephant mounted warriors. In the proposed research work, the effect of such a large number of non- combatant infantry soldiers in army will be analyzed.

6. The History of Navy as a unit of the army in ancient India is not well known. We find that in south, in the 10^{th} and 11^{lh} century, the naval superiority of the Cholas was so great that the Bay of Bengal was virtually converted into a *Chola* lake. The *Bhagalpur* inscription of the *Palas* mentions the existence of the navy in the *Palas* military structure. But certainly it was not of any match to that

of the Cholas. The proposed research work will include the study and comparison of the naval strength of north and south India. It is also necessary to know why the Palas could not build up a navy like that of Cholas despite having a long coast line in their control.

7. The armies of the Indian rulers were defeated by the Arabs and Turks because they did not take advantage of enemy's on weakness and did not resort to feints and manoeuvres in which Arabs and Turks were experts. Onslaught the rear or on the flanks of the enemy was regarded as a sinful act and to advance in pursuit of a retreating army was considered unchivalrous. We find that initially the Mahabharata war was also decided to be fought on certain war ethics, but in actual battle all these laws were not followed vigorously and were frequently violated both by unjust Kauravas and the just Pandavas. It would be interesting to study that, when historically armies in India used to resort to the fare and foul tactics in winning wars, why was it not done when we faced Arabs and Turks, who were experts in these tactics?

8. *Prithiviraj Chauhan* has often been blamed for neglecting the war preparations after successfully winning the first battle of *Tarain* in 1191 AD, but how can a military general of the stature of *Prithviraj Chauhan* commit such grave mistake. The actual

reasons of the neglect need more analysis.

9. Although the concept of feudalism had crept in the Indian history long before the coming of *Rajputas* but by this time it had attained various new complexities specially when it was introduced into the contemporary military system and it had often come into consideration that such a feudal army was hardly dependable or efficient when it met with its foreign counterparts. Why it was so? During the proposed research work answer to this question will be searched?

10. From the time of *Jayapala* of *Udabhandapur to* that of the *Prithviraja III* of Ajmer and Delhi not one but as many as three or four confederacies were formed to resist the foreign foe. The grim menace of a *Turkish* invasion compelled some of the north Indian states to lay aside for a while their mutual hatred and jealousy. Curiously enough, each one of these coalition proved ineffective in the long run. Why? Were there any military reasons behind this failure?

Review of the Available Literature:

Although some work has been done on the military system of the Ancient India like the military systems during the Marathas, Rajputas, British India respectively and We also have some good books in this regard viz., War in Ancient India by Dr. V.R.R Dikshitar, Military system in Ancient India 2nd edition by B.K Majumdar, Military History of India by Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, Military System of the Marathas by Surendra Nath Sen, Military system of the British India (1607- 1947) by H.S Bhatia, Military System of India (1850- 1900) by K.M.L Saxena but to the best of my knowledge , little work has so far been done specifically on the military system of the Ancient Indian history in which the time period of circa 606A.D- 1206 A.D was very crucial from the military, social, economic, cultural and political point of view. Thus it is imperative to go into the depth of this section of the Ancient Indian history.

Significance of the Problem:

The significance of the present study will lie in the fact that the researcher would like to draw the attention of academicians and military and political establishments toward the military drawbacks in this transitional part of the Indian History so as to put up examples for learning to avoid similar-mistakes in the future.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose behind the proposed research work is to fulfill my interest in military history specially the ancient military history and to try to fill the existing void of adequate specific research work for this time period.

Methodology:

The proposed research work will be analytical in nature and the Historical method will be used in the research work. Both primary as well as secondary sources will be utilized. Among the primary sources due importance will be given to the classical accounts and the foreign accounts especially of the Chinese and the Muslims. The concerned archaeological sites, museums, archives etc. will be visited and various journals on the subject, army publications etc. will be consulted. The necessary use of the Internet will be made as and when required. The aim will be to unfold the correct picture and present it in an analytical form.

Title of the Proposed Research:

The title of the proposed research work will be "Military system in the northern India (606 A.D-1206 A.D): A Study", under which the military system of the Indian kings will be studied in depth and in comparison to that of their contemporary foreign armies. The proposed

research work will analyze the military drawbacks of the Indian kings when they met Arabs, Turks etc, in the battlefield. The area of the study will be northern India i.e. region north to the Vindhya Mountain ranges to include rulers of both the Indo-Gangetic group (Kannauj, Sindh, Bengal, Malwa, Punjab) and the Himalayan group (Afghanistan, Kashmir, Nepal, Assam). The military specialties of almost all the Indian rulers starting with Harshavardhan (606 A.D - 647 A.D) to establishment of the llbari -Turk dynasty under Qutubuddin Aibek in 1206 A.D will be analyzed and compared. (See maps attached in the end)

TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

Chapter One:	Preface: (a) Importance of the Army in the Kingdom. (b) Necessity and Structure of the Military System.
Chapter Two:	Political, Social, Economic and Religious Conditions of the Period Under Study (606 A.D.-1206 A.D.)
Chapter Three:	A Study of the Various Limbs of the Army, Fortifications and Weapons.
Chapter Four:	Military Administration (Recruitment, Training, Ranks Camp etc.).
Chapter Five:	War Strategies (Strategies and Tactics in War, Diplomacy etc).
Chapter Six:	Role of the Moral Ethics in the War.
Chapter Seven:	Role of the Moral Ethics in the War.
Chapter Seven:	Conclusion: Why the Indian Military System Defeated Against their Contemporary Foreign counterparts viz., the Arabs and the Turks etc.

Appendix:

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